

# A Study of Bhai Vir Singh's Poetry

Pritam Singh Safeer

BHAI VIR SINGH SAHITYA SADAN  
NEW DELHI

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## INTRODUCTION

During his life span of 85 years (December 5, 1872 to June 10, 1957) Bhai Sahib Bhai Vir Singh wrote voluminously with dedication and devotion. He wrote in Punjabi in preference to Braj Bhasha, the favourite language of the scholars of his days.

I had the opportunity to be the Editor of "The Bhai Vir Singh Abhinandan Granth Samiti", which brought out the Abhinandan Granth on August 23, 1954, with a foreword by the then President of India, Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. This occasion provided an opportunity to the literary luminaries, all over the world, to appreciate the genius of Bhai Vir Singh. The Shatabdi Granth of 1972 also enabled quite a number of writers and scholars, both Indian and foreign, to evaluate various aspects of writings of Bhai Sahib.

UNESCO and Sahitya Akademy, as also Languages Department, Punjab, brought out representative collections on Bhai Sahib. Many scholars like Prof. Harbans Singh of Punjabi University, Prof. Gurbachan Singh Talib, Col. J.S. Guleria, Shri G.S. Khosla have endeavoured to evaluate the works of Bhai Sahib which, of course, will enable many more scholars to assess and analyse the contribution of Bhai Sahib to Punjabi literature and Sikh thought.

Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan endeavours to bring out works of Bhai Sahib in English and Hindi for the benefit of general readers and scholars. The present volume from the pen of Justice Pritam Singh Safeer, himself a poet of repute, is a

significant addition to the study of Bhai Sahib as a poet. Due to certain unavoidable circumstances proof reading errors in some of the earlier pages could not be rectified. We hope the slip will not affect the interest of the readers.

New Delhi :  
March 15, 1985

HARBANS SINGH  
General Secretary  
Bhai Vir Singh Sahitya Sadan

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## Garlands of Rippling Waves

When the stars shine every night the heavens enjoy a fanfare of twinkling lights.

Humanity gives birth to shining stars, men or women, only once in a while. Such stars, in their destined field of human activity continue to shine in accordance with the capacity originally pervading their existence.

Bhai Vir Singh was born with an evershining spark of divinity in him. As he progressed in years the spark became a streak of light. An age came when he became a central star in a galaxy of his own.

The prominent aspect in him was that from the beginning till the end a cosmic consciousness permeated all his actions. Even in case of highly enlightened persons there are periods when life entertains many kinds of lapses. His life had an eternal touch in it. He did not suffer any lapses. Progressive uniformity spelled his every thought, his every deed.

The parents, who brought him up, were personages of rare integrity. Gurbani *i.e.* The Sikh scriptures entered his soul even while in the lap of his mother. Dr. Charan Singh, his father, was a writer of some eminence. The genius in his son attained unique heights.

In the history of the Sikhs he remains a phenomenon. In a single individual were combined the virtues of a saint, an inestimable capacity to produce literature and the ability to provide guidance to his chosen one's in respect of all intricate problems that

arise in life. He was soft spoken and would not talk much. The gift of poetic genius had been lavishly bestowed on him. Most of his life very exceptional people could have access to him. While alone, perhaps he was never alone. A sustaining blissfulness emanating from the Supreme Power constantly lived with him.

The poet incarnate had the divine song perpetually vibrating in every pore of his body.

No poet who may have written in Punjabi had competent knowledge of all the Ragas and the Raginis which Bhai Sahib had. The compositions emanating from his inspiration had the distinction of being in tune with well sustaining measures.

It may be stated at once that his ever flowering genius displayed a distinct individual imprint and his poems were not a mere production of the impact of the scriptures. The awakening of the divine in his soul equipped him with a rare insight into nature. He had an indivisible personality which produced distinct feelings characteristic in being theological.

Born on 5th December 1872 he began to write at a young age.

This is an effort to estimate and imbibe some of his enrapturing poetical works. Let us turn to.

ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਦ ਹਾਰ

The Garlands of Rippling Waves.

The "Universal" in Bhai Vir Singh is luminously throbbing in these lines :—

ਹੇ ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਇਸ ਦਿਸਦੇ ਦੀ !  
ਸਾਨੂੰ ਪਰੇ ਨਾ ਸਟੇਂ ਹਾਂ ।  
ਧੁਰ ਮਰਕਜ਼ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਕਿਧਰੇ  
ਠਾਟ ਅਸਾਡਾ ਠਟੇਂ ਹਾਂ !  
ਵਿੱਥ ਕਿਸੇ ਤੇ ਰੱਖ ਜਿ ਸਾਨੂੰ  
ਤੂੰ ਖਿੜਨਾ ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੋਣਾ ਸੀ,  
ਦੀਦੇ ਦੇਖਣਹਾਰੇ ਦੇ ਕੇ  
ਨਜ਼ਰੋਂ ਪਰੇ ਨਾ ਹਟੇਂ ਹਾਂ !

The poet is in love with the elemental, therefore, he has entreated :—

O The reality in this manifestation  
Do not throw me away :  
Deep inside the core of your presence  
Rehabilitate me in entire sublimation.  
If while keeping me at some distance  
You were to be rapturous and happy  
Then having bestowed the eyes that see  
Never withdraw beyond my sight.

The poet has disclosed in an introductory passage that the contents in this volume consist of those thoughts which after the incoming of 1909 began to perpetuate themselves in various poetical forms.

Bhai Sahib was an elevated soul. He was in love with the unseen. The throb of divinity in him had its source in heavens. Every breath of his life was full of bliss and he lived in ordained discipline.

In his youth, the love for the eternal created in him the insight and the wisdom of the sages.

In the above quoted passage with which this volume of poems begins is the prayerful supplication that the inner reality which is sustaining all that is visible should not discard the soul in love with it. There is the fear of separation. There is intense desire to remain conscious of His presence everywhere. The poet is conscious that he can only seek the blessings and prays that his eyes may at all times recognize the presence of the lord in all situations.

Bhai Sahib possessed the inherent quality of deep thinking. He would penetrate deep into the visible. His analytical mind would without exertion perceive all aspects in man and in nature.

Every hour of his life was productive. Poetry and prose came to him with equal facility.

The most significant aspect was that he lived more of virtue than people could know and preached more through silence than through speech.

Prof. Puran Singh at one time had become apostate. Swami Ram Tirth's impact was such that Prof. Puran Singh got his long hair cut off. He abandoned his faith and became a sanyasi *i.e.* a recluse.

His wife Maya Devi has recorded in her preface to Puran Singh's poetical works that a meeting with Bhai Vir Singh Ji transformed her husband. Puran Singh told her that he would never allow his hair to be cut off. He described that Bhai Sahib had combed with his fingers through the shorn hair and remarked that these were as soft and comforting as long shining hair would be. A touch having divine magic in it reclaimed Puran Singh back into Sikhism.

The narration of the above incident has relevance to the production of great poetry. There is no artificiality in Bhai Vir Singh's writings. The only conscious aspect was that he was aware of the musical strains in various forms of poetical expression. He was a man of great learning. He knew many languages. His introductory notes to some of his compositions clarify that he had perused poetry written in different meters in various languages. Bhai Sahib has stated that the above quoted composition in its likeness resembles the meter in which "Rubais" are written in Persia. A careful perusal of his poetical procurement affirms that he remains unmatched in providing profound variety in thought and form.

He remains the harbinger of a new age in Punjabi poetry.

None of his contemporaries could measure up to him. He did not write merely for those living through his times. The span of his song is limitless. There is eternal fragrance in some of his poems. Let us be introduced to another composition.

“ਅਰੂਪ ਦੇ ਦੀਦਾਰ ਦੀ ਤੜਫਨ”  
ਤੋਂ ਬਣੀਆਂ ਅਖੀਆਂ,  
ਪਰ ਰੂਪ ਦੇ ਕਰ ਸਾਹਮਣੇ, ਰੁਖ  
ਬਾਹਰ ਦਾ ਦੇ ਰਖੀਆਂ,

ਦੇਖਣ ਨਜ਼ਾਰੇ ਸੋਹਿਣੇ ਰੀਝਣ  
 ਤੇ ਰਚ ਰਚ ਜਾਣ ਪਰ  
 ਮਿਟਦੀ ਨਾਂ ਤਾਂਘ ਅਰੂਪ ਦੀ :  
 'ਪਲ ਰੂਪ ਤੇ ਫਿਰ ਭੁਖੀਆਂ ।

Out of intense longing for perceiving the invisible  
 These eyes came into being but facing all beauty  
 They are socketed to look outside  
 They see scenic beauty and feel repleted  
 Time and again try to be one with it  
 But the eagerness for the invisible is unsatisfied  
 After feeding on beauty they are still hungry.

There was inborn quest in the poet which was evermore to strive for love with the divine. His was a soul seeking no salvation. An invisible beloved was drawing him to itself for unification. There was perpetual consciousness of living in separation. There was intense longing to submerge into the Universal.

A truthful moment expressed itself. He felt his eyes had been born out of benediction. The eyes were to restlessly search figuring out to themselves the one who was in all ages featureless. The poet was full of awareness that all charming manipulations of nature could distract the eyes. He observed that even after feeding on attractive sights his eyes continued to be listless. An inner urge continued to seek the beloved.

Blessed was he who in the prime of youth, while living a married life was full of supernatural sanctity.

“Khalsa Samachar” was the newspaper which he was running. He was turning out highly persuasive prose. People living far and wide were being inspired to live in accordance with the tenets of Sikhism. He practised those principles in his day to day life. He acquired an enlightenment which could impart the magic touch.

Performing all the tasks he was still always in tune with the muse of poetry. The panorama around him could any time produce a significant song.

There was unique pining for the unattainable. The quality of introspection introduced him to all intricate psychological situ-

ations. He could clearly imagine the problems which humanity faced. His own problem, however, was uppermost in his mind. Therefore he wrote :—

ਤੋਲ ਤੇ ਸੂਰਜ  
ਘਾਹ ਉਤੇ ਮੈਂ ਪਈ ਤੋਲ ਹਾਂ  
ਨੈਣ ਨੈਣ ਹੋ ਰਹੀਆਂ,  
'ਦਰਸ-ਪਯਾਸ' ਵਿਚ ਨੈਣ ਭਰ ਰਹੇ  
ਪਾਣੀ ਪਾਣੀ ਹੋਈਆਂ,  
'ਦਰਸ ਪਯਾਸ' ਹੁਣ ਰੂਪ ਮਿਰਾ ਹੈ  
ਮੈਂ ਵਿਚ ਹੋਰ ਨਾ ਬਾਕੀ  
ਚੜ੍ਹ ਅਰਸ਼ੋਂ, ਆ ਅੰਗ ਲਗਾ  
ਮੈਂ ਵਿਛੀ ਤੇਰੇ ਰਾਹ ਪਈਆਂ ।

Apart from music, in these lines, there is an exposition of highly enduring philosophical thought.

Wherefrom is all this life ?

There is some invisible power which goes on creating. All that becomes visible, at a certain point of destiny again merges back into the invisible. There are countless forms of life. Wherefrom did the various shapes of life originally arise ? It does not need religion to accept that the power that creates and consumes back into itself is the same. The poet receives inspiration from the glistening dew drops twinkling on green grass. In the afore-quoted stanza he says :—

“I am the dew sprinkled on grass.  
I am turned into eyes, many many eyes.  
These eyes are filled with the desire to see Him.  
In identity I am turning into water.  
My whole self is the incarnate longing for Him.  
Nothing else remains in me  
Shine out of the high heavens.  
Come imbibe me ; I am spread on your path” !

The dew is symbolic of the poet's own self. Scattered in drops of desire he is longing to be imbibed in to the universal.



The green leaves of the grass on which the dew drops are described to be lying can allow those drops to trickle down to be sucked up by the earth. The soul does not want to be dried up in the dust. It wants to be lifted up. The pure shining rays of the sun will turn the dew drops into sunshine itself.

Bhai Sahib had fertile imagination. Truth, however, was the predominant note of his life. The thoughts which were rhymed into song were those which really pervaded his being. In every elevated soul there is the pining for the divine. In him the desire was always there to be sublimated. Many moments of his life he must have lived in a state of sublimation.

He was firm in his faith. He was firm in his love. No circumstance in his life made him deviate from the chosen path. The lustre inside him did not escape notice by others. The devotion which he received, however, did not incite ego. It can be recorded on the basis of personal experience that he was self-restrained, congenial and inexplicably attractive.

It was his source of inspiration which sustained him in writing out whatever came out of the depth of his mind as well as from the unseen. Through him was being dispersed a fragrance which equally permeated his prose as well as poetry. He was saturated with unlimited grace.

There was nothing which could distract his mind or thought. The fact is that he was ever engrossed in work.

Poetry provides an index to the manner in which the poet lives and thinks. It does provide an estimate of the poet. The composition reproduced here would give you an insight into the moments of bliss through which he lived :—

ਦੇਹ ਇਕ ਬੂੰਦ ਸੁਰਾਹੀਓਂ ਸਾਨੂੰ  
ਸੋਚ ਸਮੁੰਦਰ ਬੋਝੇ ।  
ਬੇਖੁਦੀਆਂ ਦੇ ਚਾੜ੍ਹ ਅਰਸ ਤੇ  
ਆਸ ਅੰਦੇਸ਼ੇ ਤੋੜੇ ।



ਰੰਗ ਸੁਹਾਵੇ ਤੇ ਨੌਰੰਗੀ  
 ਪੀਂਘ ਘੁਕੇ ਆਨੰਦੀ,  
 ਆਣ ਹੁਲਾਰੇ ਅਮਰ ਸੁਖਾਂ ਦੇ  
 ਮੁੜਨ ਨਾ; ਐਸਾ ਜੋੜੇ ।

Give us a drop to drink out of your goblet  
 Which may consign my fears into the sea  
 Lifting into the heavens of eternal bliss.  
 It may eliminate hopes and apprehensions  
 Light may possess me and a multicoloured  
 Intoxication may lift the Soul in a swing  
 The ecstasy may be full of eternal pleasures  
 Which may never be repulsed,  
 I should be so united !

There was persistent desire in him to seek sublimation. Every fibre in his body functioned in a state of sanctification. The love in him had exceptional faith in prayer. In the above quoted lines of poetry there is the supplication that a single drop of nectar may inebriate his whole being. The conflicting thoughts dominating the routine of life may get buried into deep sea. The poet in earnestness postulates a state of mind in which life may be soaring in the high regions of everlasting bliss. In that state no apprehensions will haunt his life. Desires will not disturb his peace. He wants to be in tune with Him out of Whom all life arises. His existence, he prays, may not remain dormant. He invites divine grace which may shower gratification on him. The inner light will impart its colour to the limbs. He is aware that there can be pitfalls in thought, word and deed. He wants an even mind perpetually in rhythmic unison with the beloved. His beloved is the one out of whom galaxies of stars arise to outshine each other. No charming feminine face is visible in his writings.

May it be said that it is the natural target of a poet's love which determines the content and quality of expression.

It may be stated that the poet with whom we are concerned used to wake up between 2—30 to 3 A. M. He would then get immersed in prayers. Some of his writings bear the date and time when those were written. He would often times start writing as

early as at 4 A. M. In an atmosphere of unique silence thoughts would travel from the unseen to wear the garments of prose or poetry.

It is well known that his instructions were that he should not be disturbed till the lunch hour. After that interval it was essential to give rest to the limbs. Most of the days he did not write during the afternoons.

A strict vegetarian, he was used to early dinners. He would offer his evening prayers and go to bed early. That alone could revive him in the early hours of the next day to produce consequential literature.

A poet's mind is never silent. The process of entertaining and estimating experiences goes on.

Rousseau had made a remarkable observation when he said :-

“In the mountains our bodies are more active, our minds more serene. Our pleasures less ardent and our passions much more moderate. Our meditations acquire a degree of sublimity from the grandeur of the objects around us. It seems as if being lifted above all human society, we had left every low terrestrial sentiment behind, and that as we approach the ethereal regions, the soil imbibes something of their eternal purity”.

Living in Amritsar, Bhai Sahib carried within him the love for all the Gurus and was in devoted love with the Almighty.

The serenity in him did not need any purifying air from high mountaineous regions. The city in which he lived was full of people. The inner peace in him did not require any isolation to sustain it.

Poetry arises out of passion and pain. It is the kind of passion which lifts the poet's mind and thought which determines the greatness of his expression.

Rarely, but truthfully some persons possess the prowess to enjoy physical presence in far off environment. Sitting away from natural sights imparting sanctifying effect, he could experience eternal purity. Why was that ? Because his beloved always reigned over his mind.

He wrote :—

ਯਾਦ

ਯਾਦ ਸਜਨ ਦੀ ਹਰ ਦਮ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ,  
ਲਹਿ ਗਈ ਡੂੰਘੇ ਥਾਂਈਂ  
ਵਾਂਗ ਸੰਗੀਤ ਲਹਿਰਦੀ ਅੰਦਰ  
ਬਣ ਗਈ ਰਾਗ ਇਲਾਹੀ ।  
ਦਾਰੂ ਵਾਂਗ ਸਰੂਰ ਚਾੜ੍ਹਦੀ  
ਤਰਬ ਵਾਂਗ ਥਰਰਾਵੇ,  
ਖਿਚੇ ਤੇ ਰਸ-ਭਿਨੀ ਕਸਕੇ  
ਲਗੇ ਫਿਰ ਸੁਖਦਾਈ ।

I continuously keep remembering my beloved.  
That remembrance has dived deep into my recesses  
Rippling like the waves of a song.  
It pervades as divine music.  
It intoxicates like the wine.  
It vibrates like the strain of a tune.  
It draws to itself imparting delightful pricks.  
Even at that it is comfortingly pleasant.

A rare sanctification had crystallized in a physical self. His life was a constant process of purification. The yearning for infinite love was the index to an uprising galaxy which in unique shine revolved inside him. The ups and downs in circumstances did not shake his steadfastness. He was never anxious for praise which of its own enriched his day to day history. With every breath he seemed to be grafting more and more on his acquisitions.

In the above quoted stanza remains captured evermore a sublime state of mind containing mesmeric influence of love. You don't remember your beloved unless you are possessed by him. You do not love something which is just in vacuum. The love for the divine also assumes physical aspects. Is there no physical commandment in that which effectively changes your way of living? It is really a parental presence which guides you in all actions.

If an eternal song is vibrating in you, then you will greet and meet people differently. If you are held in a soft grasp of inebriation you will pour out thoughts which will involve others in the same direction in which you are travelling. Your admirers may turn into devotees. That happened in Bhai Sahib's case. His words never went waste. Those who came in devoted contact with him developed a change in their manner and method of dealing with others. What was it that made him exceptional? He could estimate his contemporary writers by reading what they wrote. He could unhesitatingly express his love for others. He would calculate his actions before hand. He was so sure of himself that he could predetermine the performance of others in his presence. Such a person had, in the above quoted stanza outpoured his yearning that he should always remain conscious of his sublime love. He beseeched his beloved to be always present inside him. He could not contemplate any parting. To what extent he had imbibed Him, may remain debatable but it is undeniable that his daily life had in it a prolonged measure of meditation. In that aspect of existence he was gracefully different than the others.

There was another element in him. An incomprehensible invisible curtain kept his real self concealed from many of his close associates. The inebriation which prevailed in him kept him in its exclusive possession.

Let it be said that his poems are a noble gift keeping alive some of the music which he heard in silence.

Long before his advent, J. Dryden, an English poet of remarkable attainment wrote "Song for Saint Cecilia's Day". He said :

"From Harmony, from heavenly Harmony  
     This universal frame began ;  
 When Nature underneath a heap  
     of Jarring atoms lay  
 And could not heave her head,  
 The tuneful voice was heard from high  
     Arise, ye more than dead ;  
 Then cold, and hot, and moist and dry

In order to their stations leap,  
 And Music's power obey  
 From harmony, from heavenly harmony  
 This universal frame began :  
 From harmony to harmony  
 Through all the compass of the notes it ran,  
 The diapason closing full in man".

The great poet was concerned with the incoming of "man". He perceived the existence of high heavens. There was harmony out of which the original phase of existence began to emerge. He described that at a prehistorical period nature lay under a heap of Jarring atoms. Then from the unseen high a tuneful voice spoke. Cold and hot, moist and dry came to prevail. A process of creation obeying the music's power resulted in :

"The diapason closing full in Man".

The background is surely theological. A correct pitch was reached. The dominant being the "Man" whose descendants we are, was the culminating product of a process in which "Music's power" performed the act of procreation.

Bhai Vir Singh believed that all visible creation had in it the throb of "Reality" as its "Life". All initiation, all resurgence was out of "Reality". That faith was the source of his inspired longing :

ਹੇ ਅਸਲੀਅਤ ਇਸ ਦਿਸਦੇ ਦੀ  
 ਸਾਨੂੰ ਪਰੇ ਨਾ ਸਟੇ ਹਾਂ ।

"O" The Reality in this manifestation  
 Do not throw us away".

The devotion in him had inculcated the belief that only through its kindness the Supreme would graciously own him. That devotion kept an element of the supernatural alive in him.

As centuries have moved along poetry has been changing in tune and expression. At one time it was essential to create rhyme. The terminating words had to be identically musical. There was more of song and a greater touch of simplicity. The

poet's eye everywhere was concerned with beauty. J. Nash, the English poet wrote the poem :

### SPRING

Spring the sweet spring, is the year's pleasant king  
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring  
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing  
Cuckoo, Jug Jug, pu-we, to witta woo ;

The palm and may, make country houses gay  
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day  
And we hear birds tune this merry lay  
Cuckoo, Jug Jug, pu-we, to witta woo....

A wide knowledge of the language was necessary. That alone could facilitate a smooth picking up of words which could produce soft similar music.

William Shakespeare remains mighty in his domain. Let us examine his famous song and notice the manner in which, one of the worlds greatest poets produced music. You must be aware of this song :

Under the greenwood tree  
Who loves to lie with me,  
And turn his merry note  
Unto the sweet birds throat

Come hither, come hither, come hither ;  
Here shall he see  
No enemy

But winter and rough weather  
Who doth ambition shun  
And loves to live 'The sun,  
Seeking the food he eats  
And pleased with what he gets  
Come hither, come hither, come hither ;

Here shall he see  
No enemy  
But winter and rough weather



Rhyming was an ancient attribute of poetry. It was practised in all countries. Its nomenclature changed in different languages.

Bhai Sahib put his pen to many rhymes and measures. He introduced Punjabi poetry to forms and patterns which were till then unknown.

There was and will always remain a significant distinction between what Bhai Sahib wrote and what Shah Hussain or Bulleh Shah had written. Sufism has also a theological background. Bulleh Shah had said unto himself :

ਬੁਲ੍ਹਿਆ ਸ਼ਹੁ ਤੈਥੋਂ ਵੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ  
ਪਰ ਵੇਖਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਅੱਖ ਨਹੀਂ  
ਤਾਹੀਓਂ ਜਿਦ ਦੁਖੜੇ ਸਹਿੰਦੀ ਏ  
ਮੂੰਹ ਆਈ ਬਾਤ ਨਾ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ ਏ !

Addressing himself Bulleh Shah said that his beloved was not separate from himself. The eye to perceive the beloved, however, lacked in sight. For that reason the soul was being tormented. He said that he could not restrain himself from stating the truth which was vibrating on his lips.

Bulleh Shah was also in a process of self-realisation. The inner brightness in Bhai Vir Singh was, however, not outspoken. He outshined others in being greatly self-restrained. There was conscious meditation and there was unconscious meditation. That aspect was helpful in adopting new rhymes. "Rana Surat Singh" which will be dealt with later on was written in "Sirkhandi Chhand". In the very first volume the "garland" contains multicoloured flowers contributing their distinct hypnotizing smell.

The poems are on varied topics. Some of them were: "My beloved", "Preparations", "The Will", "Nectar", "To the one plucking the roses", "Consciousness and inebriation", "Atonement", "The bird in the cage", "Remembrance", "Music" and "Looking in both directions". There are many other expositions in delightful song.

Her ealized that “conquering” his “ethereal beloved” was beyond human effort. He worshipped the invisible one but in a moment of desperation he grasped how stone-hearted was the one from whom there was hardly any response. He wrote :

ਲਗੀਆਂ ਨਿਭਣ

ਪੱਥਰ ਨਾਲ ਨੇਂਹੁ ਲਾ ਬੈਠੀ  
ਨਾ ਹੱਸੇ ਨਾ ਬੋਲੇ,  
ਸੁਹਣਾ ਲੱਗੇ ਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਮੋਹੇ  
ਘੁੰਡੀ ਦਿਲੋਂ ਨਾ ਖੁਹਲੇ,  
ਛਡਿਆਂ ਛਡਿਆ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਨਾਹੀਂ  
ਮਿਲਿਆਂ ਨਿਘ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ;  
ਹਛਾ ਜਿਵੇਂ ਰਜਾ ਹੈ ਤੇਰੀ  
ਅਖੀਅਹੁਂ ਹੋਹੁ ਨਾ ਉਹਲੇ।

I am entangled in love with a stone  
It neither smiles nor speaks :  
It is attractive in beauty and captivates me  
But it does not open up its heart  
with all efforts to abandon, it is difficult to abandon  
No warmth is imparted by its impact  
Well I bow to your dispensation  
Please never go beyond my sight !

Whatever the terrain of your affection it has its moments of pleasure and pain. The yearning for celestial response recorded the hovering of the mind over the shines and shadows of separation.

That was how Bhai Vir Singh's love experienced a striving of the heart.

Let us turn to John Clare. He estimated love as few others had done. Love was omnipresent. It enlivened all places and all moments in exhilarating situations. There is rhymed charm in what John Clare says :

Love lives beyond  
The tomb, the earth, which fades like dew :  
I love the fond,  
The faithful, and the true.



Love lives in sleep  
 The happiness of healthy dreams :  
 Eve's dew may weep,  
 But love delightful seems.

'Tis seen in flowers  
 And in the mornings pearly dew ;  
 In earths green hours,  
 And in the heavens eternal blue.

'Tis heard in spring  
 When the light and sunbeams warm and kind  
 On angels wing  
 Bring love and music to the mind.

Human blood is all of one colour. Men and women in preponderance of matters react similarly in similar circumstances. Poetry in ages and climes wherever written conveys feelings at least containing partial resemblance. Love and hate and even unconscious conflict in mind are almost identically portrayed in literature. The instances provided by English poems reassure that similar repercussions of the mind are recorded there as well.

Bhai Vir Singh's genius prospered in the climate created by the recitation of the Sikh scriptures. In the beginning of many of his poems preceeding the heading he has in many places quoted from Gurbani. His exposition of Sikhism was authentic and inspiring.

In his poem "ਜੀਵਨ ਕੀ ਹੈ" "What is life" he has raised significant questions and provided answers in the course of poetical discussion. The philosophical background is provided by the Sikh dogma. The environment which he describes is visited by an imagined charming young woman. She picks up within her contemplation the whole panorama of life. She asks :

ਕੀ ਹੈ ਤੇ ਕਿਉਂ ਹੈ ਸਾਰਾ  
 ਪੈਟਾ ਤਾਣਾ ਤਣਿਆ ?

"Why and wherefore all this  
 The intricate interwoven pattern ?

Then again she inquires :

‘ਮੈਂ ਜੀਂਦੀ, ਮੈਂ ਜਾਣਾ ਜੀਂਦੀ  
ਹਾਂ “ਜੀਵਨ” ਮੈਂ ਜਾਣਾ,  
ਪਰ ਇਹ ਜੀਵਨ ਕੀ ਹੈ ਵਸਤੂ ?  
ਕੀ ਹੈ ਇਸਦਾ ਮਾਣਾ ?’

“I am alive, I know I am living  
I am “life”, I know that ;  
But of what “substance” is this life  
And how far can it be depended upon ?

After deep contemplation the poet had come to certain conclusions. He redeemed himself by outpouring the conflict and satiating it through answers. What are those answers ? Those are warbling attitudes of the human mind. The inquisitive damsel remains despondent till the impact of the smiling scenic beauty brings it to her mind that life is a fulfilment of joyful bliss. She realises that happiness arises from within. In optimism you begin to see pleasant bloom spreading out everywhere. Nature continues its display. Life is part of nature and in faith should be lived out smilingly. Bhai Vir Singh desired that life should acquire an inset pleasure which should be firm and should not change as the years go by. In that way he contemplated an exceptional change in those who could love the creator.

The great english poet S.Y. Coleridge looked at the span of life passing from youth into old age. He recorded under the heading :

### YOUTH AND AGE

‘Verse, a breeze’ mid blossom straying  
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—  
Both were mine ! Life went a—mayning  
With Nature, Hope, and poesy,  
When I was young !

When I was young ? Ah, woeful when !  
Ah ! for the change ‘twixt Now and Then !  
This breathing house not built with hands,

This body that does me grievous wrong,  
 O'er airy cliffs and glittering sands  
 How lightly then it flash'd along ;  
 Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,  
 On winding lakes and rivers wide,  
 That ask no aid of sail or oar  
 That fear no spite of wind or tide !  
 Nought cared this body for wind or weather  
 When youth and I lived in't together

Flowers are lovely ; Love is flower-like,  
 Friendship is a sheltering tree ;  
 O ! The joys that came down shower-like,  
 Of Friendship, Love and Liberty,  
 Ere I was old.

The poet frankly confesses that all he has described was true of life before he left behind his youth and reached old age. It is a long poem which in a subsequent stanza says :

“Dew-drops are the gems of morning,  
 But the tears of mournful eve !  
 Where no hope is, life's a warning  
 That only serves to make us grieve  
 When we are old.

Generally even in case of enlightened people youth is bright with years full of hope. As the body begins to age apprehensions begin to arise. The dew-drops do not seem to be shining like gems. They do look like tears.

Those who love Him continue to imbibe bliss even in old age. Bhai Vir Singh was in the exceptional category of men full of bliss.

There is a striking distinction which keeps him in a class by itself. The distinction is that in Bhai Vir Singh we find a historical continuation of the eternal message given to the ages by the Sikh Gurus. He was a writer with a mandate in him. In prose and poetry we find him accomplishing his purpose. He is aware of the target which he is to achieve.

He wrote articles, dealing with diverse problems. He wrote novels. In them he created characters which demonstrated how true Sikhs, men or women, were to conduct themselves in adverse situations.

He wrote in an exceptional style about the lives of Sikh Gurus.

In the poems we find that there is replenishing of song by his pen which produced brilliant effective prose.

It has to be noticed that the basic feature in his writings is that inside them is a staunch preacher who is steadfast on his selected path. The preacher is, however, careful in watching his own tendencies. None of his poems loses its music or charm because it is emanating from a preaching pen.

He adopts different topics in order to create a calculated effect. That may be diminishing spontaneity to some extent. That, however, is beyond discovery by an ordinary reader.

He makes the flowers in a garland to talk when the garland is going to be discarded by a god-loving person.

ਸਾਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਉਤਾਰ ਗਲ  
ਸਾਨੂੰ ਨਾ ਵਿਸਾਰ ਦਿਲੋਂ  
ਸਟ ਨਾ ਉਤਾਰ ਸਾਨੂੰ  
ਤੇਰੇ ਬਿਨਾ ਸਾਡਾ ਕੌਣ ?

Do not remove us from around your neck

Do not make your heart forget us

Do not remove and throw us away

Without you, who will own us ?

He was being attracted by all kinds of imagery. Some of his poems contain fanciful representations. The poet oftentimes resorted to metaphorical expressions. He wanted to decry and resist all efforts at separating him from his beloved. He depicted his own state of mind by describing what a creeper which had climbed up a tall tree in a forest began to whimper when some one

began to pull it off. The creeper began its humble protest by saying :

ਕੇਲੋਂ ਦੇ ਗਲ ਲਗੀ ਵੇਲ

(The creeper clinging to Kelon (a tree)

ਹਾਇ ਨਾ ਧਰੀਕ ਸਾਨੂੰ

ਹਾਇ ਵੇ ਨਾ ਮਾਰ ਖਿਚਾਂ

ਹਾਇ ਨਾ ਵਿਛੋੜ

ਗਲ ਲਗਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਾਪੀਆ

These opening lines in themselves suffice to convey that the poet's life has passed through serious situations. It had taken him days and months in meditation to climb up reverential heights. The conspiracy of circumstances one after the other began to strain his nerves and pull him down. A resistance stimulated him and he desperately wanted to keep soaring high. He could not compromise with being dragged down from the high pedestal which he had climbed.

In this volume are revealed the pangs experienced in his youth. His poems faithfully record that even in the warm bloom of his youthful years he had the affection for the non-physical Supreme-self.

He also loved Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth Master. He felt that the Yamna flowing by the side of the great Sikh shrine at Paonta Sahib in Himachal Pardesh was even now conscious of the sanctity imparted by the bathing of his beloved master in it. There is a poem about that in this volume.

The topics varied with his attitude of mind. Many have seen and enjoyed the smell of various kinds of narcissus. The flower looks like an eye. Bhai Vir Singh was so much impressed in some rewarding moment that he spoke out through the flower. His narcissus spoke out :

ਮੈਂ ਸਾਂ ਤਕਦੀ ਤਕਦੀ ਤੱਕ ਰਹੀਆਂ

ਨਾਂਹੀ ਤਕਦੀ ਕਦੀ ਸਾਂ ਥਕ ਰਹੀਆਂ,

ਟੱਕ ਬੰਨ੍ਹਕੇ ਤੱਕ ਲਗਾਂਵਦੀ ਸਾਂ,  
 ਅਖਾਂ ਓਧਰੇ ਬੰਨ੍ਹ ਬਹਾਂਵਦੀ ਸਾਂ,  
 ਜਿਧਰ ਗਏ ਨਾ ਮੁੜੇ ਸਨ ਪਯਾਰ ਵਾਲੇ,  
 ਸੁਤੀਆਂ ਕਲਾਂ ਜਗਾਣ ਦੀ ਸਾਰ ਵਾਲੇ ।

There was the relentless single-minded distinct longing in the poet for preceiving, imbibing and enjoying his beloved in all situations. He spoke out his mind through the smiling flowers. What the narcissus said was :

I was looking out, looking out and  
 Never getting tired of looking out  
 I was looking out with a fixed gaze  
 My eyes were glued in that direction  
 Wherefrom had not returned the one who had bestowed love  
 Who had enlivened new currents of affection.

The same undercurrent of celestial thought runs through all his compositions.

Having written about the high Himalayan ranges and the deep oceans and having recorded a poetical dialogue between Chandravati and Pushpawati in the course of which true love is sought to be defined, Bhai Sahib has outpoured the feelings of an injured peacock. It is a long poem with a preface in verse. The poet described the loathsome hunter who out of greed for feeding on its meat shoots down a peacock. In a premeditated speech the dying peacock sermonizes :—

ਸਿਰਜਣਹਾਰ ਹੈ ਸੁੰਦਰਤਾ ਆਪ ਸਾਰੀ  
 ਜਿਸਨੂੰ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਹੀ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਸਿਆਣੀਏ ਜੀ ।  
 ਜਿਥੇ ਸੁੰਦਰਤਾ ਆਣ ਪਰਕਾਸ਼ ਪਾਵੇ  
 ਉਥੇ “ਰੱਬ ਪਰਕਾਸ਼” ਪਛਾਣੀਏ ਜੀ ।  
 ਸੁਹਣੇ ਕਾਦਰ ਨੇ ਸੁਹਣੀ ਹੈ ਰਚੀ ਕੁਦਰਤ,  
 ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਿਚ ਹੀ ਸੁਹਜ ਪਛਾਣੀਏ ਜੀ ।  
 ਵਸੇ ਸੁੰਦਰਤਾ ਦਾ ਸਾਰੇ ਮੀਂਹ ਇਥੇ  
 ਦੀਦੇ ਖੋਲ੍ਹ ਇਸ ਛਹਿਬਰ ਨੂੰ ਮਾਣੀਏ ਜੀ ।

The entire span of beauty is the manifest supreme  
 We should recognize Him in being beautiful  
 Wherever beauty sheds its excellence  
 There we should bow to the lustre of God Himself  
 The Gracious Creator has devised splendrous Nature  
 We should rever His resurgence in Nature  
 Beauty is raining over all environment  
 With open eyes we may enjoy this sprinkling of excellence !

The peacock is in itself a rare manifestation of beauty in Nature. Its shape, its multicolours and its voice are indeed remarkable. The dying bird, gasping for breath was admonishing the assassin. He was philosophically admonishing him for his short sightedness because of which he was blind to the existence of God in every being.

The poet had hit upon a plan. He was to weave out a sonnet to contain a story disbursing the persuasion that the presence of the Supreme Power which creates every thing must be recognized in all beings.

His life manifested a system of religious truth. His versatile pen preached the gospel which was enshrined in him. He was sent down to earth in order to tread a bright orient path. He was on a mission to give the best in the east to the entire world. The first volume of his poems remains strikingly fresh. He continued to be the harbinger of abiding confidence in the benevolence of the Supreme Power.



## Matak Hulare (Celestial Vibrations)

Nature has been graciously bountiful in devising the charming details in which the valley of Kashmir exists. You cross high mountains and enter the Paradise of soft level landscape full of an astonishing variety of flowers. Suddenly you come across nectar flowing out of crystal clear springs. There are lakes big and small and there are rivers singing along in rare glee. The grandeur is not confined to geographical enchantment. There are trees tall and medium sized bearing such delicious fruit that its taste endures in you.

Kashmir in all ages has had admiring visitors. The Punjabi language and literature had the good fortune that in order to enrich them Bhai Sahib, a unique poet, had a sojourn in Kahsmere. The divinity in Nature cast its spell. An unknown magic produced the musical strains which are incarnated in the poems in this volume. The collection is admired as being a magnificent comprehension of nature's munificence. Let us notice some of the enchanting compositions. We begin with :—

ਮੇਰੀ ਜਿੰਦੇ

ਤੇਰਾ ਥਾਉਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਨਦੀ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ  
ਤੇਰਾ ਥਾਉਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਜੰਗਲ ਖੇਲੇ,  
ਤੇਰੇ ਭਾਗਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਅਰਸ਼ਾਂ ਤੇ ਉਡਣਾ  
ਤੇ ਗਾਂਦਿਆਂ ਫਿਰਨ ਅਕੇਲੇ ।  
ਤੇਰਾ ਜੀਵਨ ਸੀਗਾ ਤੇਰੇ ਹੀ ਜੋਗਾ  
ਤੂੰ ਆਪੇ “ਆਪੇ” ਨਾਲ ਖੇਲੇ,



ਤੂੰ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਰੌਲਿਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਆ ਖਲੋਤੀ  
ਤੈਰੇ ਚਾਰ ਚੁਫੇਰੇ ਝਮੇਲੇ ।

Addressing the celestial current of life in himself, he said :—

You were to abide by a flowing stream  
You were to live in a secluded forest  
You were destined to keep flying in heavens  
And continue singing by yourself  
Your life was meant to be owned by you  
You were to atone to your inner self  
How is it that you are caught in noises  
Around you is a web of problems !

Unless life withdraws into itself and there is solitude to sort out problems a man's creative capacity would surely suffer. The poet wanted peace. His flights into higher regions deserved that he should not be disturbed by any distractions.

He wrote about the grace inducted into him by his beloved :—

ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਛੁਹ  
ਤੁਸਾਂ ਤੋੜਿਆ ਅਸੀਂ ਟੁਟ ਪਏ  
ਵਿਛੜ ਗਏ ਸਾਂ ਡਾਲੇ,  
ਤੁਸਾਂ ਸੁੰਘ ਸੀਨੇ ਲਾ ਸਟਿਆ  
ਵਿਛੜ ਗਏ ਤੁਸਾਂ ਨਾਲੇ ।  
ਪੈਰਾਂ ਹੇਠ ਲਿਤਾੜ ਲੰਘਾਉਆਂ  
ਕੀਤਾ ਖੰਭੜੀ ਖੰਭੜੀ  
ਪਰ ਸੁਕਰਾਨਾ ਛੁਹ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਦਾ  
ਅਜੇ ਨਾ ਭੁਲਦਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ !

You plucked us and we parted  
We got separated from the branch  
You enjoyed the smell put to the bosom and tossed  
We fell away from you  
The passers-by treaded over us  
And we were torn into petals  
Even then the thankfulness for the contact  
Is evergreen and unforgettable !

In Bhai Vir Singh there is a singular attachment which throbs through all rhymed thought. Here the flowers speak. A gratefulness is being expressed for the beloved's touch even though the act performed was that of snatching beautiful fragrant flowers from the mother branch.

There are queer elements which inspire the poet to express himself allegorically. There is a custom in conformity with which a kind of green powder is mixed with water and its thin paste is used to create red designs on the palms of the hands and on the feet of the bride. The ladies, even otherwise use it in Northern India. The poet imagined that there was a beautiful damsel's clasp which closed over the red colour imparted to the palm. He wrote :—

ਸਜਣ ਦ ਹੱਥ ਲਗੀ ਮਹਿੰਦੀ

ਆਪੇ ਨੀ ਅਜ ਰਾਤ ਸਜਣ ਨ  
ਸਾਨੂੰ ਫੜ ਘੁਟ ਰਖਿਆ ।  
'ਵਸਲ ਮਾਹੀ ਦਾ ਮਿਹਰ ਮਾਹੀ ਦੀ  
ਅੱਜ ਅਸਾਂ ਨੇ ਲਖਿਆ ।  
ਜਿੰਦੜੀ ਸਾਡੀ ਅੰਗ ਸਮਾ ਲਈ  
ਵੇਖ ਵੇਖ ਖੁਸ਼ ਹੋਵੇ—'  
ਕਿਉਂ ਸਹੀਓ ਕੁਝ ਸਵਾਦ ਸਜਣ ਨੇ  
ਛੁਹ ਸਾਡੀ ਦਾ ਭਿ ਚਖਿਆ ?

To-night the beloved held me in a clasp.  
The kindness of the beloved and the amalgamation  
With him was enjoyed by me !  
My real tint of life was grafted on his limbs  
He showered admiring looks on me !  
O my friendly maidens is it not true  
That the beloved also enjoyed a taste of my touch !

The admiring eye with youthful glance retained in memory the panorama of decorated damsels. The mind, however, was full of love for the Divine. The poet's personality had a set purpose in it. All that he perceived raised the genius in him to similar heights. Was his mind a one track mind ? Is it wrong to look for the

same thing everywhere ? Studying Bhai Vir Singh in detail one has to agree that the main current in his poetical inscription remains remarkably harmonious.

World's greatest poets have shown manifold attitudes to life and all that it brings before the mind's eye. Almost all of them wrote on different topics. Their thoughts and moods did not transport the same message everytime. The mightiest of the mighty W. Shakespeare may be examined in this regard. Let us get acquainted with the following poem :—

### WINTER

When icicles hang by the wall  
     And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,  
 And Tom bears logs into the hall,  
     And milk comes frozen home in pail,  
 When blood is nipt, and ways be foul  
 Then nightly sings the staring owl  
     Tuwhoo !  
 Tuwhit ! Tuwhoo ! A merry note !  
 While greasy Joan doth keel the pot  
 When all aloud the wind doth blow,  
     And coughing drowns the parsons saw  
 And birds sit brooding in the snow  
     And Marian's nose looks red and raw ;  
 When roasted crabs hiss in the bowl  
 Then nightly sings the staring owl  
     Tuwhoo !  
 Tuwhit ! Tuwhoo ! A merry note !  
 While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

According to his talent at that point of his life Shakespeare sublimated England's winter in the foregoing poem. Let us examine another of his poems. He wrote a poem under the caption "Revolution". His mind pondered over the inevitable ways of life. In a philosophic strain he wrote :

## REVOLUTION

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,  
 So do our minutes hasten to their end,  
 Each changing place with that which goes before,  
 In sequent toil all forwards to contend.

Nativity, once in the main of light,  
 Crawls to maturity, where with being crown'd  
 Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,  
 And time that gave doth now his gift confound.

Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth,  
 And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,  
 Feeds on the varieties in nature's truth,  
 And nothing stands but for his scythe to mow.

And yet, to times in hope, my verse shall stand  
 Praising thy worth, despite his cruel hand.

Without comment the current of thought in the two poems quoted above remains distinctly dissimilar.

Human mind does not react in the same way to all situations. The poet according to his awakened stature incurs different sensitivity in different moods and the poems find themselves framed in various patterns of rhyme and thought. In all languages the phenomenon depicting warm feelings in rippling divergent thought prevails.

It needs deep meditation to control yourself. It is the result of perpetual bliss that the poet may be converging everytime on a divine central theme.

How was poetry dawning on him? Where from music sprinkled itself into the words which he combined in his compositions? In moments of introspection he achieved the knowledge which he did not keep back. He disclosed :—

ਕਵਿਤਾ ਦੀ ਸੁੰਦਰਤਾਈ  
 ਉੱਚੇ ਨਛਤਰੀਂ ਵਸਦੀ  
 ਆਪਣੇ ਸੰਗੀਤ ਲਹਿਰੇ  
 ਆਪਣੇ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਲਸਦੀ

The beauteous excellence of poetry  
 Resides in high regions  
 In its own grace it strives into music  
 Its brightness shines out of its own dispensation !

A very intimate perception alone could have painted in poetry the manner in which inspiration turns into rhyme. In the same composition he described the permeation :—

ਜਿਉਂ ਤੇਲ ਤਾਰ ਪ੍ਰੇਤੀ,  
 ਜਿਉਂ ਆਬ ਮੋਤੀਆਂ ਦੀ  
 ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਾਰ ਪ੍ਰੇਤੀ  
 ਨਾਜ਼ਕ ਸੁਬਕ ਸੁਹਾਈ ;  
 ਕੋਮਲ ਗਲੇ ਦੀ ਸੁਰ ਜਿਉਂ  
 ਝੁਣਕਾਰ ਸਾਜ਼ ਦੀ ਜਿਉਂ  
 ਝਰਨਾਟ ਰੂਪ ਵਾਲੀ  
 ਤਾਰੇ ਡਲਕ ਜਿਉਂ ਛਾਈ ।

An ordainment was speaking through his pen. The rendering would mean :—

Like the dew drops sparkling on a wire  
 Like the glistening surface of the beads  
 Shining along a streak of vision  
 It is enshrined in soft sublimation  
 An enchanting strain from a delicate throat  
 A quiver of tunes out of a musical instrument  
 An intense sensation caused by a flash of beauty  
 A manifestation of the twinkling stars

You will nowhere come across such subtle and magnificent glorification of the actual process through which poetry takes unique birth.

His mind even when blossoming in bliss could concentrate on the regeneration of poetry.

Every poet of consequence has exceptional talent in him. The climate of divinity in Bhai Vir Singh was exquisite and supersecular.

He had in him a spontaneous flow of words and music. Rarely has any poet so lucidly described the incoming of poetical compositions. He knew many languages. His pen observed the restriction of enriching the literature in his mother-tongue. He is universally recognized as the harbinger of a new age in Punjabi literature. It became crystal clear that every intricate thought could be expressed in this language.

Prof. Puran Singh was right in emphasising that many people had visited Kashmir but that land of flowers had never before entertained a visitor of such consequence. The snow-bound mountains had in many places in their lap the shrines where prayers had gone on for centuries. At one time sanskrit flourished and the Pundits exerted their supereminence.

The Hindu influence suffered an irreversible jolt at the hands of desperate Muslim conquerors. A period of checkered history followed. Some of the places of worship were destroyed. The pains and pangs which fell to the lot of the people became alive in the poet's mind. The universality in him sharply reacted to the eloquence with which the ruins in Kashmere spoke to him. The bygone excited sympathy and the musical cords inside the poet began to produce compositions one after the other.

Kashmir makes an unavoidable impact on all who visit it for the first time. There is music in the air. Another kind of music is rhyming out of its singing springs. Its rivers produce enlightening relief. The birds produce peculiar soul stirring notes. The flowers disperse intoxicating fragrance. Their riot of colours bewilders the eye. The poet in Bhai Vir Singh, always living in the domain of bliss absorbed the panoramic reality in those surroundings and wrote :—

ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰਾ ਡਲ ਨੂੰ

ਅਸੀਂ ਸ਼ਿਕਾਰੇ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਤੇਰੇ  
(ਪਰ) ਬਿਨ ਚੱਪੇ ਬਿਨ ਹਾਂਝੀ ।  
ਕੋਈ ਠਉਰ ਨਾ ਥਿੱਤਾ ਸਾਡਾ  
“ਮੈਂ” ਤੋਂ “ਮੈਂ” ਗਈ ਵਾਂਝੀ ।

ਵਗ ਵਾਉਂ ਦੇ ਲਈ ਫਿਰ ਰਹੇ  
 ਏਧਰ ਉੱਧਰ ਗੱਭੇ  
 ਪਰ "ਰਸਦਾਤੀ ਛੁਹ" ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਦੇ  
 ਰਸੀਏ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਹਾਂ ਜੀ ।

There is a fairly large lake in Srinagar Kashmere. Its name is 'Dal'. Many small boats locally called "Shikara" ply in it. At that time, when the poet had the occasion to visit Kashmere wooden oars were used to row the boats.

In this composition the "boat" is addressing the lake. In depth of thought it is the body and the soul together expressing gratefulness to the Creator. The body and the soul are the boat, the Creator is the boatsman rowing it. The poem is :—

### THE BOAT TO THE DAL LAKE

We are a boat moving about in you  
 But without the oar and the boatsman  
 We are unstationed and have no target  
 The 'I' i.e. the ego is eliminated from the "Self"  
 The winds vagrancy blows us hither thither  
 But because of your bliss inducing touch  
 We are saturated affinities of your Grace

There is an imprint of his inner-self in all his writings. So many and so many have inhaled the nourishing breeze while being moved about in small wooden boats over the waters of the Dal lake. He comprehended that the vast lake was like the span of life. The boatsman rowing the individual self of the poet over the currents of life was invisible. Life was moving along by itself. It was inevitably incurring events. The winds of passion, of greed and ego were blowing the individuals in aimless directions. There was vagrancy in the mind of man. In his case, the affection bestowed upon him by the unknown was a constant source of a peculiar delight which kept the mind and the body in a state of enlightenment. He was all the while enwrapped in ethereal merriment.



Long ago Lord Buddha had said :—

“MIND precedes things, dominates them, and creates them”.

The truth is that it is the mind's intense desire which seeks fulfilment. All actions are, in the first instance, contemplated. As and when the situation arises, the individual manipulates the matters in such a manner that he or she may be able to physically obtain that which had been thought about.

Tolstoy had said :—

“Evil thoughts are worse than avil actions whence misdeeds proceed”.

The world wars did not spark of incidentally. The world's arsenels were replenished with the weapons of war. There was competitive production of the instruments of destruction. Why did all that happen ? The minds of those individuals or groups who were in power had conceived keen desire to conquer countries, big and small, in order to create a new empire which they wanted to govern.

In case of Bhai Vir Singh it was his mind in which was enshrined a divine affection which kept him conscious of the presence of the Lord with him. Life was not an encumbrance. It was an opportunity to regain and enjoy an ideal contact with the sublime. He was a rare individual who never had a despondent estimate of life. In order to estimate the stature of his mind let us examine a glaring example which presents a contrary but in itself a sufficiently truthful picture of life. In most of the cases life is a mixture of pleasure and pain. There is preponderance of poverty. Lord Bacon, an English poet, obviously well-placed in life wrote a poem which remains historic in depicting the various paths which life treads. His intimate probe into certain depths offers scope for comparative study. His poem is :—

### LIFE

The world's a bubble, and the life of Man  
 Less than a span ;  
 In his conception wretched, from the womb  
 So to the tomb ;



Curst from the cradle, and brought upto years  
 With cares and fears ;  
 Who then to frail mortality shall trust,  
 But limns the water, or but writes in dust.

Yet since with sorrow here we live opprest,  
 What of life is best ?  
 Courts are but only superficial schools  
 To dandle fools ;  
 The rural parts are turned into a den  
 of savage men :  
 And where's a city from all vice so free,  
 But may be termed the worst of all the three ?

Domestic cares afflict the husband's bed  
 or pains his head ;  
 Those that live single take it for a curse,  
 or do things worse ;  
 Some would have children, those that have them moan  
 or wish them gone ;  
 What is it, then, to have, or have no wife,  
 But single thralldom, or a double strife ?

Our own affections still at home to please  
 Is a disease ;  
 To cross the sea to any foreign soil,  
 Perils and toil ;  
 Wars with their noise affright us when they cease,  
 We are worse in peace :—  
 What then remains, but that we still should cry  
 Not to be born, or, being, born, to die ?

According to Lord Bacon from birth to death life is an exercise in futility. Those who are in life's struggle face odd problems. Those who are married face domestic cares. Those who remain single take it that they are passing their days under a curse.

Men and women get tired of the woes of life. Their faith gets shaken. Why ? Because "things are not what they seem". People, by and large do not have any spiritual sustenance in them. You will find Lord Bacon's lamentation being supported by the

genius of a luminary whose pen produced lucent poetry. He had, undeniably, keen insight into all matters. Shakespeare wrote.

### THE WORLD'S WAY

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry—  
As, to behold desert a beggar born,  
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,  
And purest faith unhappily forsworn.

And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,  
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted  
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced  
And strength by limping sway disabled.

And art made tongue-tied by authority,  
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,  
And simple truth miscalled simplicity,  
And captive Good attending captain Ill :  
Tired with all these, from these I would be gone,  
Save that to die, I leave my love alone.

It would be useful to look into your own lives. There is the chain of bright hopes shattered by adverse circumstances. Your moments of glorious attainments have faded away. Those who were at one time intimate friends are after the lapse of years forgotten strangers. In your basket of memories you carry the tears and smiles of your close relatives whose affectionate figures no longer exist in blood and bone. There always are disturbing inconsistencies in life.

Bhai Vir Singh's earthly existence, however, had fruitful harmony in it. There was a bond of amity which kept alive in him sublime happiness. His outlook which measured all events had in its background his unshaken faith that the heavenly designs are eternally merciful. Even in his dreams, the dawn of divine splendour showered its bright rays. A rare image of an excellent experience remains captured in the following melody :

### ਕੰਬਦੀ ਕਲਾਈ

ਸੁਪਨੇ ਵਿਚ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਮਿਲੇ ਅਸਾਨੂੰ  
 ਅਸਾਂ ਧਾ ਗਲਵਕੜੀ ਪਾਈ,  
 ਨਿਰਾ ਨੂਰ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਹੱਥ ਨਾ ਆਏ  
 ਸਾਡੀ ਕੰਬਦੀ ਰਹੀ ਕਲਾਈ,  
 ਧਾ ਚਰਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਸੀਸ ਨਿਵਾਯਾ  
 ਸਾਡੇ ਮਥੇ ਛੋਹ ਨਾ ਪਾਈ,  
 ਤੁਸੀਂ ਉਚੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਨੀਵੇਂ ਸਾਂ  
 ਸਾਡੀ ਪੇਸ਼ ਨਾ ਗਈਆ ਕਾਈ ।  
 ਫਿਰ ਲੜ ਫੜਨੇ ਨੂੰ ਉੱਠ ਦੌੜੇ  
 ਪਰ ਲੜ ਓ "ਬਿਜਲੀ-ਲਹਿਰਾ",  
 ਉਡਦਾ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਪਰ ਉਹ ਅਪਣੀ  
 ਛੋਹ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਗਿਆ ਲਾਈ ;  
 ਮਿੱਟੀ ਚਮਕ ਪਈ ਇਹ ਮੋਈ  
 ਤੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਲੂਆਂ ਵਿਚ ਲਿਸ਼ਕੇ  
 ਬਿਜਲੀ ਕੂੰਦ ਗਈ ਥਰਰਾਂਦੀ  
 ਹੁਣ ਚਕਾ-ਚੁੱਧ ਹੈ ਛਾਈ ।

### THE QUIVERING ELBOW

In a dream you presented yourself  
 Voluntarily I fell in embrace  
 You being absolute light could not be clasped  
 My elbow continued quivering  
 Immediately I put my forehead on your feet  
 You did not impart the transforming touch  
 You were high and heavenly, I was trivial  
 I could not manage the situation  
 Again I made a thrust to catch your scarf  
 But the scarf was a tremor of lightning  
 While in flight it continued its impact  
 The dust I am made of gave out a flash  
 And you brightened out of every particle  
 The lightning trembled in a dazzling roar  
 Now a disarming darkness is prevailing !

It indeed defies definition as to how deep and intense his love for his "Beloved" was.

The dreams, oftentimes, remain alive in your thoughts after you wake up. The dawn with the fresh tinge of scarlet rays inspires the mind and the pen to capture the dreams in poetic liber.

He who is loved and meditated upon can make His Splendor replenish a dream. His divine presence inspired a voluntary effort to become one with Him. So long as it lasted the brightening flash was unique. As soon as the event terminated itself the darkness that followed must have been tormenting. Such appearances and such partings continue to rejuvenate the thirst for the "Eternal".

The spiritual contacts elevate the soul and induct peacefulness in all limbs of the body. The mind has to control desires.

Whatever the nature of those efforts they are pre-ordained. The sanctification of the intellect clears the way for an expanded and detailed appreciation of all things, in all situations.

The ruins in Kashmere reminded the poet of the original grandeur of the shrines. There were several beautiful sites where the worshipers had established those shrines. In their zeal to out-do each other in being iconoclastic the Islamic invaders did not exercise any control that from the point of view of preserving historical art the shrines deserved to be protected. They could have restricted their use without resorting to demolitions.

The poet appreciated that the locality at one time called "Awantipura" had vanished. The two shrines which existed there having been demolished, the small inhabitation in their neighbourhood had also vanished. He recorded :

ਅਵਾਂਤੀਪੁਰੇ ਦੇ ਖੰਡਰ  
ਅਵਾਂਤੀਪੁਰਾ ਕੀ ਰਹਿ ਗਯਾ ਬਾਕੀ  
ਦੋ ਮੰਦਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਢੇਰ  
ਬੀਤ ਚੁਕੀ ਸਭਯਤਾ ਦੇ ਖੰਡਰ  
ਦਸਦੇ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੇ ਫੇਰ,

ਸਾਖੀ ਭਰ ਰਹੇ ਓਸ ਅੱਖ ਦੀ  
 ਜਿਸ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੋਤੀਆ ਬਿੰਦ  
 “ਹੁਨਰ ਪਛਾਣਨ” ਵਲੋਂ ਛਾਇਆ  
 ਗੁਣ ਦੀ ਰਹੀ ਨਾ ਜਿੰਦ ।  
 “ਜੋਸ਼ ਮਜ਼ਹਬ” ਤੇ ‘ਕਦਰ ਹੁਨਰ’ ਦੀ  
 ਰਹੀ ਨਾ ਠੀਕ ਤਮੀਜ਼  
 ਰਾਜ਼ੀ ਕਰਦੇ ਹੋਰਾਂ ਤਾਈਂ  
 ਆਪੂੰ ਬਣੇ ਮਰੀਜ਼ ।  
 ਬੁਤ ਪੂਜਾ ? “ਬੁਤ” ਫੇਰ ਹੋ ਪਏ  
 ‘ਹੁਨਰ ਨਾ ਪਰਤਯਾ ਹਾਇ !  
 ਮਰ ਮਰ ਕੇ ਬੁਤ ਫੇਰ ਉਗਮ ਪਏ  
 ਗੁਣ ਨੂੰ ਕੌਣ ਜਿਵਾਇ ?

The poet's lamentation is instructive for all times. The greater the rage the greater is the occasion for cool consideration of the immediate and ultimate consequences. Many people had seen the ruins. It was a discerning sympathetic eye which incurred imagination. The poet deplored what he had seen and observed :

“The ruins of Awantipura”  
 What is there left of Awantipura ?  
 Here are these ruins of two temples  
 The distorted pieces of a bygone civilization  
 Depicting vagrancies of Time !  
 They are reminding us of the “eye”  
 Which had the cataract in it  
 In respect of the appreciation of art  
 There was no life left to admire ability  
 The ability to observe distinction between religious fervour  
 and the regard for art was lost !

While trying to heal others they became diseased  
 Idol worship ? The odols again cropped up  
 But the art, that alas could not come back  
 The idols dying out many times were reinstalled  
 Who could enliven the precise quality to practice art ?

The hands that built up the various shrines and decorated them with colourful paintings were of those who were worshippers. In any case devoted attention had been paid to the construction and maintenance of the temples. The idols installed in them could have been removed without inflicting dire destruction. Those shrines symbolised a particular civilization. Those shrines were "history" erected in stone. Similar was the eminence of the shrine at Martand. Sun was the deity which the people gathered to worship there. Bhai Vir Singh wrote :

ਮੰਦਰ ਮਾਰਤੰਡ ਦੇ ਖੰਡਰ  
ਮਾਰ ਪਈ ਜਦ ਮਾਰਤੰਡ ਨੂੰ  
ਪੱਥਰ ਰੋ ਕੁਰਲਾਣੇ :  
“ਪੱਥਰ ਤੋੜੇ ? ਦਿਲ ਪਏ ਟੁਟਦੇ !  
ਦਿਲ ਕਾਬਾ ਰੱਬਾਣੇ—  
ਲਾਏਂ ਹਥੋੜਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ? ਪਰ ਤੱਕ !  
ਸੱਟ ਪਏ “ਰੱਬ-ਘਰ” ਨੂੰ  
ਘਟ ਘਟ ਦੇ ਵਿਚ ਵਸਦਾ ਜਿਹੜਾ  
ਤੂੰ ਕਿਨੂੰ ਰੱਬ ਸਿਵਾਣੇ ?

### **The Ruins of The Martand Temple**

When Martand was beaten down  
The stones wept and wailed :  
“You are breaking stones ? hearts are bursting  
The heart is the home of God  
You may hammer us but just perceive  
The strokes fall on the abode of God  
It is He who lives in everyone  
But who is He whom you recognize as God ?

There is subtle serious comment in this condemnation of bigotry. The temple as it stood was a specimen of architectural attainment. If preserved it would have continued to display the accomplishment manifested in it.

Bhai Sahib admired some of the beautiful gardens which he came across in Kashmir, About one of them he wrote :

ਨਸੀਮ ਬਾਗ਼

ਜਿਉਂ ਮਾਵਾਂ ਤਿਉਂ ਠੰਡੀਆਂ ਛਾਵਾਂ  
ਅਸਾਂ ਤੁਧੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਡਿਠੀਆਂ,  
ਠੰਡੀ ਪਿਆਰੀ ਗੋਦ ਤੁਧੇ ਦੀ  
ਛਾਵਾਂ ਮਿਠੀਆਂ ਮਿਠੀਆਂ,  
ਮਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ਬਾਲ ਪਿਆਰਾ  
ਤੈਨੂੰ ਸਭ ਕੁਈ ਪਯਾਰਾ  
ਜੋ ਆਵੇ ਉਸ ਲਾਡ ਲਡਾਵੇ  
ਠਾਰੇ ਜਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਲੁਠੀਆਂ ।

Like the cares which the mothers bestow are your cool shades  
Cool comforting is your loving lap  
The sheltering shades are sweet to enjoy  
The mother loves her own child  
You shower your affection on everyone  
Whosoever comes gets affectionate attention  
You impart delightful respite to heart burnings.

The garden must have, at that period of its existence, possessed enchanting qualities. Its flowers, its shades surely had the quality to inspire praise.

The well-known garden called "Nishat" also attracted attention. The garden is near the Dal lake. Splendid mountain peaks hold the garden and the lake in their lap. To Nishat the poet said :—

ਨਿਸ਼ਾਤ ਬਾਗ਼

ਡਲ ਦੇ ਸਿਰ ਸਿਰਤਾਜ  
ਖੜਾ ਨਿਸ਼ਾਤ ਤੂੰ  
ਪਰਬਤ ਗੋਦੀ ਵਿੱਚ  
ਹੈਂ ਤੂੰ ਲੇਟਿਆ !



ਟਿਲੇ ਪਹਿਰੇਦਾਰ  
 ਪਿਛੇ ਖੜੇ ਹਨ  
 ਅਗੇ ਹੈ ਦਰਬਾਰ  
 ਡਲ ਦਾ ਵਿਛਿਆ ।  
 ਸਜੇ ਖਬੇ ਰਾਹ  
 ਸੁਫੈਦੇ ਵੇੜਿਆ  
 ਦਿਸਦੀ ਖੜੀ ਸਿਪਾਹ  
 ਜਿਯੋਂ ਚੁਬਦਾਰ ਹਨ ।

Like the crown which Dal is wearing  
 You are present  
 In the lap of mountains  
 You are spreading out  
 Green mounds as sentries  
 Are attending behind you  
 Before you is the assemblage  
 Of rippling waves of Dal  
 On the right and left sides  
 Eucalyptus is engrossing you  
 It seems a contingent of soldiers  
 Is performing the duties of sentries.

This is a pen portrait of the famous garden which was originally designed under the Mughal regime. The spot so carefully selected remains celebrated throughout the centuries.

Kashmir is full of sources of pure shining water. These springs have for ages comforted thirsty visitors. Their locations are in enchanting environment. Nature has been lavish in bestowing its beauty in all places in the valley. The various springs have distinct names. "Very Nag", "Ichha Bal", "Kukar Nag" are very well known. All visitors are taken to them. The crystal clear water, with a greenish tinge because of its depth, flowing out of "Very Nag" in the ultimate, forms itself into a river. The river known as "Vidastha" at one time has the popular name Jehlum and is one of the five rivers which gave the name Punjab to the region through which they are flowing since prehistoric times. Bhai Sahib wrote about "Very Nag" also but he wrote twice about



“Ichha Bal”. One of the compositions pertaining to that beautiful source of water flowing out in unique rhythm deserves to be produced.

The poet puts a question which is answered by the spring “Ichha Bal”.

ਇੱਛਾ ਬਲ ਤੇ ਡੂੰਘੀਆਂ ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ  
ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ :—ਸੰਝ ਹੋਈ ਪਰਛਾਵੇਂ ਛੁਪ ਗਏ  
ਕਿਉਂ ਇੱਛਾਬਲ ਤੂੰ ਜਾਰੀ ?  
ਨੈਂ ਸਰੋਦ ਕਰ ਰਹੀ ਉਵੇਂ ਹੀ  
ਤੇ ਟੁਰਨੋਂ ਬੀ ਨਹਿਂ ਹਾਰੀ,  
ਸੈਲਾਨੀ ਤੇ ਪੰਛੀ ਮਾਲੀ  
ਹਨ ਸਭ ਆਰਾਮ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਏ,  
ਸਹਿਮ ਸ਼ਾਦਲਾ ਛਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਸਾਰੇ  
ਤੇ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਟਿਕ ਗਈ ਸਾਰੀ ।  
ਚਸਮੇ ਦਾ ਉੱਤਰ :—  
ਸੀਨੇ ਖਿਚ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੇ ਖਾਧੀ  
ਓ ਕਰ ਆਰਾਮ ਨਹੀਂ ਬਹਿੰਦੇ ।  
ਨਿਹੁੰ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੈਣਾਂ ਕੀ ਨੀਂਦਰ ?  
ਉ ਦਿਨੇ ਰਾਤ ਪਏ ਵਹਿੰਦੇ ।  
ਇਕੋ ਲਗਨ ਲਗੀ ਲਈ ਜਾਂਦੀ  
ਹੈ ਟੋਰ ਅਨੰਤ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀ,  
ਵਸਲੋਂ ਉਰੇ ਮੁਕਾਮ ਨਾ ਕੋਈ,  
ਸੋ ਚਾਲ ਪਏ ਨਿਤ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ।

“Deep Afternoon at “Ichhabal”

**Question :**

It is dusk, the shadows have become invisible  
Ichhabal why are you running along  
The flowing current continues its song  
Its movement has not subsided  
The tourists, the birds and the gardeners  
Have all resumed recess and are resting  
An entrancing apprehensiveness is prevailing  
And the Nature in entirety is at stand still.

**Answer :**

Those who have incurred an extraction within their chest  
 They do not set their oars at rest  
 The eyes full of ardent affection do not go to sleep  
 The flow of tears is interminable day and night  
 An intense devoted attachment allures them on and on  
 Their movement is endless and infinite  
 There is no halting place intercepting unification  
 Thence every day they continue in eternal motion.

The flowing waters reminded him of his own predicament of love. The flow out of the spring was eternal. The poet's own atonement to love was eternal. The concourse from the spring continued day and night. The intensity of affection in the poet perpetually occupied him. The hand of destiny was guiding the waters into a flowing stream merging somewhere. The poet's mind was pining for attaining amalgamation with celestial reality.

He wrote about the spring known as Matan Sahib. A small population had congregated at the place where nearby at one time Martand existed.

His keen appreciation did not ignore either Pahalgam or Gulmarg. About his visit to Gulmarg he observed :

ਗੁਲਮਰਗ

ਹੋਰ ਉਚੇਰਾ ਹੋਰ ਉਚੇਰਾ  
 ਚੜ੍ਹ ਫਿਰ ਪਧੋਰ ਆਈ,  
 ਮਖਮਲ ਘਾਹ ਸੁਹਾਣੀ ਕਿਣ ਮਿਣ  
 ਠੰਡ ਠੰਡ ਹੈ ਛਾਈ,  
 ਤਪਤਾਂ ਤੇ ਘਮਸਾਨਾਂ ਛੁਟੀਆਂ  
 ਉੱਚੇ ਹੋਇਆਂ ਠਰ ਗਏ  
 ਠਰਨ, ਜੁੜਨ, ਰਸ ਮਗਨ ਹੋਣ ਦੀ  
 ਚਉਸਰ ਵਿਛੀ ਇਥਾਈਂ ।

“GUL MARG”

After climbing higher and higher  
 Was reached a plain smooth space

Rain dropping over velvet grass  
 Pleasant coolness in attendance  
 Shrivelling heat and enthralling engagements gone  
 Reaching those heights a cool quietness was attained  
 Which cools the mind unites and mystifies it  
 That superfine calmness prevails here !

The environment in Gul Marg was conducive to blissful meditation. There was comforting quietness. Gul Marg, natural in exceptional beauty offered enthralling experience. The mystic in the poet found himself in extremely attractive and soothing atmosphere. There were no engagements to be fulfilled. Those were the moments when the mind could devotedly admire the magnificence in creation.

Kashmir in many ways saturated his mind with delight. He measured up to the stature of natural variation in the munificence in showering beauty everywhere. The sojourn in its total effect inspired him to turn himself into another Kashmere. An intense desire to invite his "Beloved" to reflect "Himself" in fantasia of existence made the poet to proclaim his entreaty by declaring :—

ਨਵਾਂ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ  
 ਮੈਂ ਰੁੰਨੀ, ਮੈਂ ਰੁੰਨੀ ਵੇ ਲੋਕਾ !  
 ਮੀਂਹ ਜਿਉਂ ਛਹਿਬਰ ਲਾਏ  
 ਟੁਰੀ ਵਿਦਸਥਾ ਡਲ ਭਰ ਆਏ :  
 ਤੇ ਵੁਲਰ ਉਮਡ ਉਮਡਾਏ  
 ਆਪਾ ਹੇਠ ਵਿਛਾ ਕੇ ਸਹੀਓ  
 ਅਸਾਂ ਨਵਾਂ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ ਬਣਾਇਆ,  
 ਗਾਓ ਸੁਹਾਗ ਨੀ ਸਹੀਉ ! ਸੁਹਣਾ  
 ਕਦੇ ਸੈਰ ਕਰਨ ਚਲ ਆਏ ।

Many a contemplation must have preceded the integration of such an ambitious protestation !

### NEW KASHMERE

I wept, I cried all people may know  
 Like the rain falling in showers

A "Vidastha" (River) ensued, a Dal was filled  
 And wuller (a lake) began brimming  
 By spreading out myself, O' friends  
 I am transformed into a new Kashmir  
 Sing the wedding song oh Belles !  
 May be the beautiful one would come to move about here !

The panoramic attraction kindled in his soul the desire to be transformed into such a form which may persuade his beloved to come and enjoy him. He wanted to live in a state of mind and body saturated with bliss.

In this volume there are compositions pertaining to "Lalli" a woman of exceptional spiritual attainments and about Framurz who had the dream that after leaving the world he was to live in paradise.

Matak Hulare is recognized as one of his outstanding contributions to Punjabi poetry.

Its poems are an everlasting tribute to natural magnificence which shines out in every part of Kashmere.

## Garlands of Lightening

This volume contains poems which enshrine slightly different thoughts. The main [current remains the ethereal love for his "beloved".

The first three compositions contain certain observations which can best be appreciated by noticing the following :

ਸਮਾਂ

ਰਹੀ ਵਾਸਤੇ ਘਾਤ  
“ਸਮੇਂ” ਨੇ ਇਕ ਨਾ ਮੰਨੀ,  
ਫੜ ਫੜ ਰਹੀ ਧਰੀਕ  
“ਸਮੇਂ” ਖਿਸਕਾਈ ਕੰਨੀ,  
ਕਿਵੇਂ ਨਾਂ ਸਕੀ ਰੋਕ  
ਅਟਕ ਜੋ ਪਾਈ ਭੰਨੀ,  
ਤਿੱਖੇ ਅਪਣੇ ਵੇਗ  
ਗਿਆ ਟਪ ਬੰਨੇ ਬੰਨੀ,—  
ਹੋ ਅਜੇ ਸੰਭਾਲ ਇਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਨੂੰ  
ਕਰ ਸਫਲ ਉਡੰਦਾ ਜਾਂਵਦਾ,  
ਇਹ ਠਹਿਰਨ ਜਾਚ ਨਾ ਜਾਣਦਾ  
ਲੰਘ ਗਿਆ ਨਾ ਮੁੜਕੇ ਆਂਵਦਾ ।

### THE TIME

I continued my protestations  
Time did not pay heed  
I made efforts to catch it and drag it  
Time defied being caught  
I could not detain it  
All my efforts went waste

In its swift flight  
 It crossed all barriers !  
 O Yea wake up and take care of Time  
 You may turn it to your advantage it is flying away  
 It does not know how to stop  
 And that which goes away never returns.

Here the poet is an eloquent preacher. He preaches that time is in perpetual motion. There is no hinderance which can stop the hands of the clock from moving. There are no barriers which time cannot cross. The Sermon is that while there is time still at your disposal, you must not while it away. You must use it to fulfill your tasks.

How was he spending the time ? His was indeed an untiring pen. He wrote as if a stream of unending thought was flowing out of him.

He loved nature and all natural exhibitions, which many others would ignore attracted him. Nature was a close companion, a dear friend always kind and available. He loved plants and adored the flowers. In his compositions he has painted many a picture of the scenic beauty enjoyed by him. To a man full of admiration for all things pure and sweet a dew drop in a peculiar shining situation could provide greater joy than many other events. He was caught in a moment of admiration when he wrote :

ਤੋਲ ਦਾ ਤੁਪਕਾ

ਮੋਤੀ ਵਾਂਗੂ ਡਲੁਕਦਾ  
 ਤੁਪਕਾ ਇਹ ਜੋ ਤੋਲ  
 ਗੋਦੀ ਥੈਠ ਗੁਲਾਬ ਦੀ  
 ਹਸ ਹਸ ਕਰਦਾ ਕੇਲ,  
 ਵਾਸੀ ਦੇਸ਼ ਅਰੂਪ ਦਾ  
 ਕਰਦਾ ਪਯਾਰ ਅਪਾਰ,  
 ਰੂਪਵਾਨ ਹੈ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ  
 ਪਯਾਰੀ ਗੋਦ ਵਿਚਾਲ ।  
 ਅਰਸੀ ਕਿਰਨ ਇੱਕ ਆਵਸੀ

ਲੈਸੀ ਏਸ ਲੁਕਾਇ,  
 ਝੋਂਕਾ ਮਤ ਕੋਈ ਪੌਣ ਦਾ  
 ਦੇਵੇ ਧਰਤਿ ਗਿਰਾਇ ।  
 ਨਿਤ ਪਯਾਰ ਖਿਚ ਲਯਾਂਵੰਦਾ  
 ਕਰੇ ਅਰੂਪੋਂ ਰੂਪ  
 ਅਰਸੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਹੈ ਕੁਈ  
 ਨਿਤ ਫਿਰ ਕਰੇ ਅਰੂਪ ।

### THE DEW DROP

Glistening like a pearl  
 This dew drop  
 Reclining in the lap of a rose  
 Is smiling playfully  
 Inhabitant of an invisible land  
 Dispensing infinite love  
 Has manifested inside a loving lap !  
 A ray will come from heavens  
 It will suck it up,  
 A puff of wind  
 May throw it upon earth !  
 Every day love begets it  
 To be visible out of the invisible.  
 There is a lover in high heavens  
 Who everytime makes it invisible.

Life itself is, perhaps, like a drop of dew. It sparkles in its worldly accomplishments. The source from which "life" comes remains invisible. The moment of parting arrives. Life loses existence. The soul merges into the invisible.

Bhai Vir Singh was intimately concerned with discovering the truth in respect of all situations that he came across. Life is a great teacher. A discerning mind employs itself in seeking out the elements inside all mysteries. A stage is reached when even a small incidental observation touches the depths. The composition reproduced above indicates that he was not the one to ignore even a dew drop glistening inside a rose.

It seems the poet had some special love for dew drops. In this very volume is an other poem :—

ਕਮਲ ਗੋਦੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਤੋਲ ਮੋਤੀ  
ਕਮਲ ਪਤ ਤੇ ਪਿਆ ਹਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਹਾਂ ਮੋਤੀ ਤੋਲ  
ਝੁਮਾਂ ਜੀਕੂੰ ਨੀਰ ਤੇ ਪਤਾ ਕਰਦਾ ਕੇਲ,  
ਸੂਰਜ ਰਿਸਮ ਪ੍ਰੋਤੜਾ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਉਤਰਯ ਆਣ  
ਸੋਨੇ ਤਾਰ ਪੁਰੇਤੜੇ ਮੋਤੀ ਵਾਂਗੂੰ ਜਾਣ ।

### A DEW PEARL IN THE LAP OF KAMAL

Lying on Kamal leaf I am a dew-pearl  
I am moving to and fro as a leaf dances on water  
With a sun-ray passing as thread through me !  
I have descended down  
You may appreciate me as a pearl  
A golden wire passing through me !

There is no doubt that dew drops look like pearls. Bhai Vir Singh, it seems, was exceptionally fond of them.

Some times the poet's mind is caught in an enduring aptitude. The poems written during that period are bound to reflect some similarity in their expression. Be that as it may let us turn to another entreaty to his beloved. He wrote :—

ਢੋਲਾ ਰੁੱਸ ਕੇ ਨਾ ਜਾ ।  
ਵੇ ਨਾਂ ਰੁੱਸ ਕੇ ਰੁੱਸ ਕੇ ਜਾਹ ਢੋਲਾ,  
ਆਵੇ ਹਸਨਾ ਹਸਨਾ ਆ ਢੋਲਾ,  
ਮੁੜ ਆ, ਮੁੜ ਆ, ਮੁੜ ਆ ਢੋਲਾ ।  
ਗਲ ਲਾ, ਗਲ ਲਾ, ਗਲ ਲਾ ਢੋਲਾ ।  
ਮੂੰਹ ਦਸ ਨਾ ਕੰਡ ਦਿਖਾ ਢੋਲਾ ।  
ਕੰਡ ਦਸ ਨਾ ਕੰਡ ਲੁਕਾ ਢੋਲਾ ।  
ਲੜ ਲਾਈ ਦੀ ਲਾਜ ਨਿਭਾ ਢੋਲਾ ।  
ਭੁਲਾਂ ਸਾਡੀਆਂ ਨਾਂਹ ਤਕਾ ਢੋਲਾ ।



O, my beloved do not forego me in annoyance  
 You should come along smiling all the while  
 You should come back, come back my beloved  
 You should embrace me, clasp me in embrace  
 Present your face and do not turn your back on me  
 Even if you turn your back do not hide it  
 Kindly uphold the dignity of the one you wedded  
 Please do ignore my faulty ways.

Love inside you is a constant mental process. Sometimes it imparts bliss but sometimes you begin to pine for impossible amorous occasions. Your imagination goes on playing its pranks. Sweet-songs are born out of tearing pain.

The poet is supplicating that the beloved may never leave him. There is a manipulation inside him which depicts that he is being forsaken. The incident assumes a physical aspect. For that reason the beloved is beseeched that in all circumstances all faults be excused. The Gracions one is requested to fulfil the obligations which a real wedding had imposed.

All anecdotes pertaining to love-affairs of whatsoever nature rekindled in him an intensifying affection. In this volume he recorded his pining for the invisible :—

ਸਾਈਂ ਲਈ ਤੜਪ

‘ਤੜਪ ਗੋਪੀਆਂ’ ਕ੍ਰਿਸ਼ਨ ਮਗਰ ਜੋ  
 ਲੋਕੀ ਪਏ ਸੁਣਾਵਨ ।  
 ‘ਲੁਛਣ ਸਸੀ’ ਪੁੰਨੂੰ ਪਿੱਛੇ  
 ਜੋ ਥਲ ਤੜਫ ਦਿਖਾਵਨ,  
 ਰਾਂਝੇ ਮਗਰ ਹੀਰ ਦੀ ਘਾਬਰ  
 ਮਜਨੂੰ ਦਾ ਸੁਕ ਜਾਣਾ—  
 ਏ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੌਹ ਨਜ਼ਾਰੇ ਦਿਸਦੇ,  
 ਏ ਕੁਈ ਰਮਜ਼ ਛਿਪਾਵਨ  
 ਹੇ ਅਰੂਪ ! ਇਹ ਤੜਪ ਉਹੋ ਨਹੀਂ  
 ਧੁਰੋਂ ਤੁਸਾਂ ਜੋ ਲਾਈ ?  
 ਕੀ ਇਹ ਚਿਣੰਗ ਨਹੀਂ ਉਹ,

ਜੇਹੜੀ ਤੁਸਾਂ ਸੀਨਿਆਂ ਪਾਈ ?  
 ਮਿਲਣ ਤੁਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੀ ਇਹ ਲੋਚਾ,  
 ਏ ਹੈ ਤੜਪ ਤੁਸਾਡੀ—,  
 ਜਿਥੇ ਰਮਜ਼ ਪਏ ਕੁਈ ਕਟਕੀ  
 ਏ ਕਮਲੀ ਹੋ ਜਾਈ ।

### THE LONGING FOR THE SUPREME BEING

The pining by the Gopikas for Krishna  
 Which, people so much narrate  
 Sassi's intense suffering because of Punnu  
 Her perishing in the burning desert  
 The bewildering pursuit of Ranjha by Heer  
 The obliteration of Majnu's physique  
 These are not mere spectacles of love  
 There is mystery hidden in them !  
 O, the Invisible, is it not that intense longing  
 Which you have inscribed within every breast  
 This aspiration to merge in you  
 This heart burning desire is inculcated by you  
 Whenever there is an extracting pull of affection  
 It turns into frenzy !

The historical background of this composition cannot be ignored. Lord Krishna is worshiped by multitudes of devotees. Vrindavan also called by some people as "Bindraban" is closely associated with his life-story. There were over three hundred beautiful damsels who kept company with him. The river Jamuna had deep green forests on both sides in which big cow herds grazed under Lord Krishna's supervision. His exceptional greatness is incarnated in the message contained in the holy book "Gita"

Sassi, a great beauty was the beloved of a devoted lover Punnu. Heer of whom the great poet—"Waras Shah" presents many a pen-picture in his book of poetry called "Heer" was an enchanting beauty loved by Ranjha. Majnu was the steadfast lover of Laila. Bhai Vir Singh enumerates all the love-lore and incisively makes the observation that there is the heavenly element of steadfastness in it. The earnest truthfulness in those worldly attachments was born

out of the transcendental keenness to merge into the sublime. He proceeds to record that inside every being there arises a passion for attaining the supreme which in some moments becomes delirious.

Bhai Vir Singh, in silent meditation and through his written word prayed for attaining the unattainable. That was an inborn urge. His spiritual longing is breathing through most of his poems. There have been others who at times experienced unique vibrations. A close study of some exceptional narration and that too in poetry would give an idea of the spiritual tremors that commonly inspire great men. There have been great poets in all languages. Some of their writings remain outstanding.

P. B. Shelley will live evermore in the memory of man as one of the greatest english poets. In love with the "Spirit of Delight" he wrote a great poem which in some of its stanzas provides resemblance with the compositions by Bhai Vir Singh. The poem is :

### INVOCATION

Rarely, rarely, comest thou,  
Spirit of Delight !  
Wherefore hast thou left me now  
Many a day and night ?  
Many a weary night and day  
'Tis since thou art fled away.

How shall ever one like me  
Win thee back again ?  
With the joyous and the free  
Thou wilt scoff at pain.  
Spirit false ! thou hast forgot  
All those but who need thee not.

As a lizard with the shade of a trembling leaf.  
Thou with sorrow art dismay'd ;  
Even the sighs of grief  
Reproach thee, that thou art not near,  
And reproach thou wilt not hear,

Let me set my mournful ditty  
 To a merry measure ;  
 Thou wilt never come for pity,  
 Thou will come for pleasure ;  
 Pity then will cut away  
 Those cruel wings, and thou wilt stay.

I love all that thou lovest ,  
 Spirit of Delight !  
 The fresh Earth in new leaves drest  
 And the starry night ;  
 Autumn evening and the morn  
 When the golden mists are born.

I love snow and all the forms  
 Of the radiant frost ;  
 I love waves, and winds, and storms,  
 Everything almost  
 Which is nature's and may be  
 Untainted by man's misery.

I love tranquil solitude ,  
 And such society  
 As is quiet, wise and good ;  
 Between thee and me  
 What difference ? but thou does possess  
 The things I seek, not love them less.

I love love-though he has wings,  
 And like light can flee ,  
 But above all other things ,  
 Spirit I love thee  
 Thou art love and life ! o come !  
 Make once more my heart thy home !

In P. B. Shelley you find keen love for Nature. Bhai Vir Singh was impressed by the twinkling dew drop lying in the petals of a rose. He, in another poem, called the dew-drop a "dew pearl". Shelley in his "Invocation" is in love with the "Spirit of Delight".

That spirit is the life breath of all forms which "nature" assumes  
Cospicuously Shelley says :

"I love snow and all the forms of the radiant frost  
I love waves, and winds and storms"

He also had in seclusion been friendly with many natural manipulations. His inspired declaration at the end of the poem is :—

I love love-though he has wings  
And like light, can flee,  
But above all other things,  
Spirit I love thee —  
Thou art love and life ! O come !  
Make once more my heart thy home !

Shelley was not inviting any fascinating woman to come to live with him. In earnest endeavour he was soliciting that "Spirit" to make his heart its home which spirit to mankind means both love and life.

What keeps Bhai Vir Singh apart from others is the unalterable affection which he has for the invisible beloved. All vibrations throb and soar in the same direction. Let us examine another of his compositions in this volume. He inscribes :

ਅੰਦਰ ਦੀ ਟੋਕ

ਸਿਕ ਸਿਕ ਰੋ ਰੋ ਦੁੰਡ ਦੁੰਡ ਕੇ  
ਮਜਨੂੰ ਉਮਰ ਗੁਆਈ ।  
ਪਰ ਪੰਘਰ ਨਾ ਖਾਧੀ ਲੇਲੀ  
ਧਾ ਉਸ ਪਾਸ ਨਾ ਆਈ ।  
ਅੰਤ ਹਾਰ ਕੇ ਬਹਿ ਗਿਆ ਮਜਨੂੰ  
'ਲੇਲੀ' 'ਲੇਲੀ' ਜਪਦਾ,  
ਲਿਵ ਲੇਲੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਲਗ ਗਈ ਅੰਦਰ  
ਅੰਦਰ ਲੇਲੀ ਆਈ ।  
ਲੇਲੀ ਭੀ ਹੁਣ ਖਿੱਚ ਖਾਇ ਕੇ  
ਮਜਨੂੰ ਲਭਦੀ ਆਈ,

“ਮੈਂ ਲੇਲੀ” “ਮੈਂ ਲੇਲੀ” ਕੂਕੇ  
 ਮਜਨੂੰ ਸਿਆਣ ਨਾ ਕਾਈ ।  
 “ਮੈਂ ਲੇਲੀ” “ਮੈਂ ਲੇਲੀ” ਕੂਕੇ,  
 ਮਜਨੂੰ ਲੇਲੀ ਹੋਇਆ  
 ਆਪੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਬਣ ਗਿਆ ਪ੍ਰੇਮੀ  
 ਟੇਕ ਜਾਂ ਅੰਦਰ ਪਾਈ !

### RELIANCE ON THE INNER-SELF.

Thirsting for her, weeping and searching  
 Majnu wasted every breath of life  
 But his beloved “Laila” did not yield  
 She did not repair to him,  
 At last Majnu subsided in to himself  
 And was engrossed in meditating “Laila” Laila’  
 His inner self incurred absorption in to Laila  
 And Laila entered his soul.  
 It so happend Laila was drawn to him  
 In search for Majnu she reached him  
 She started declaring “I am Laila” “I am Laila”  
 Majnu could not recognise  
 By repeating “I am Laila” “I am Laila”  
 Majnu had symbolized “Laila” in himself  
 Automatically the beloved had turned into lover  
 On account of relying on the inner-self !

Self restraint alone can permit you to cultivate a new culture in your self. It is a long process. Only His grace can help you. If you can persit you can find a change coming in you. Bhai Vir Singh had, through devoted persistence acquired a perception which in its own scope was unmatchedable.

He recalled the love-affair pertaining to Laila and Majnu. He built it up in order to assure the readers that through absolute devotion they could become one with God.

One of the gerat poets of his time who was his sincere admirer accepted many a precept issued by Bhai Vir Singh. A man of high talent Prof Puran Singh wrote in blank verse. While dealing

with the poems of Bhai Sahib, it will not be out of place to notice Prof. Puran Singh's compositions. In the poem from which the relevant passages are being quoted the poet is addressing perhaps a personification of himself. Any person is, however, at liberty to appropriate the accostation to himself. He wrote :—

ਮੁੱਲ ਪਾ ਤੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ

(੧)

ਸੋਹਣਿਆ ! ਮੁੱਲ ਪਾ ਤੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ,  
ਵੱਧ ਥੀਂ ਵੱਧ ਹੋਰ ਹਾਲੀਂ ਬਹੁੰ ਸਾਰਾ,  
ਹੋਰ ਹਾਲੀਂ ਬਹੁੰ ਸਾਰਾ, ਹੋਰ ਵੀ ਹੋਰ,  
ਤੇਰਾ ਮੁੱਲ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਹ,  
ਤੂੰ ਕੀਮਤਾਂ ਥੀਂ ਪਰੇ  
ਓ ਯੂਸਫਾਂ ਦੇ ਯੂਸਫਾ

(੨)

ਹੁਣੇ ਆਇਆ ਹੈਂ ਤੂੰ  
ਉਤੋਂ ਹਿਠਾਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ,  
ਲਾਲ ਲਾਲ ਕੰਵਾਰੇ  
ਤੇਰੇ ਹੋਠ ਹਾਲੇ  
ਕੰਵਾਰਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਦਿਲ,  
ਸਜਰਾ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਵੇ,  
ਨਾ ਵਟ ਦਿਲ ਤੇ  
ਨਾਂ ਲੀਕ ਦਿਮਾਗ ਤੇ  
ਜੁਸਾ ਤੇਰਾ ਵਾਂਗ ਨਵੇਂ ਫੁਟੇ ਫੁਲ ਦੇ ।

Leaving the second part let us move to the opening lines in the third part.

(੩)

ਸਰੂ ਵਾਂਗ ਖਲੋ ਤੂੰ  
ਪੈਰਾਂ ਆਪਣਿਆਂ ਤੇ  
ਤੇ ਪਕਾ ਜੜੀਂ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ  
ਦਿਲ ਦੇ ਕਿੰਗਰੇ ਤੇ ਦੇਖ ਤਾਰੇ ਲਟਕਦੇ

ਚੰਦ ਛੁਪ ਖੇਡਦਾ ਪਿਛੇ ਤੇਰੇ ਕਦ ਦੇ  
ਤੇ ਜਗਤ ਦੀ ਸੁਹੱਪਣ ਤੇਰੇ ਦਿਲ ਵਿੱਚ  
ਟੁਭੀਆਂ ਲਾ ਲਾ ਨਿਖਰ ਨਿਖਰ ਆਉਂਦੀ ।

It is in the fifth part that Prof. Puran Singh's pen introduces the incense of divinity : —

(੫)

ਨਿਮੋਝੂਣ ਤੇਰੀ ਬਲਾ ਹੋਵੇ  
ਮਾਯੂਸ ਤੇਰੀ ਜੁਤੀ  
ਨਿਰਾਸ ਤੇਰੇ ਵੈਰੀ ਹਣ,  
ਚਸਮਾ ਫੁਟਿਆ ਤੂੰ ਹਮੇਸ਼ਾ ਦੀ ਜਵਾਨੀ ਦਾ  
ਸਦਾ ਦੀ ਬਸੰਤ ਤੇਰੇ ਪ੍ਰਾਣ ਸੁਹਣਿਆ ।  
ਤੂੰ ਫੁਲ ਜਿਹੜਾ ਕਦੀ ਨਾ ਹਿਸਦਾ,  
ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਦੇ ਬਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ  
ਰੱਬ ਆਪਣੀ ਹਥੀਂ ਆਣ ਲਾਇਆ,  
ਪਾਣੀ ਬੇਅੰਤ ਦਾ  
ਰਸ ਦੀਆਂ ਕਣੀਆਂ,  
ਇਹ ਸ਼ਹਿਦ ਦੀਆਂ ਬੂੰਦਾਂ ਪੈਂਦੀਆਂ  
ਸੁਹਣਿਆਂ ਮੁੱਲ ਪਾ ਤੂੰ ਆਪਣਾ ।

In the whole edifice of Punjabi literature Puran Singh's contribution is conspicuously historical. In moments of exceptional emotion he wrote :

### REALIZE YOUR EMINENCE

- (1) O you the elegant be conscious of your eminence '  
To a greater extent, still more, even more  
Persist for greater realization and more and more  
It is not possible to evaluate you !  
You are beyond estimation  
O' you, who are more eminent than Yousuf !
- (2) You have come on the scene Just now  
From real heights, down here



Red coloured and virgin  
 Are your lips  
 Virgin is your heart  
 Fresh is your talent  
 No crease on your heart  
 No line accross your brain  
 Your body like a fresh budding flower !

- (3) Stand erect like a tall tree  
 On your own feet  
 And fastened to your roots  
 Watch the stars hinged on the fringes of your heart  
 The moon, hidden and playing in your shade  
 The entire beauty of the world in your heart  
 It dives and dives and comes out resplendent
- (4) That which is inimical to you may be down hearted  
 Only your foot-wear may feel despondent  
 May your enemies be in despair.  
 You the sprouting fountain of ever green youth  
 The eternal spring is your life-breath !  
 You are the flower whose bloom is never put out  
 In the garden of God planted by Providence !  
 Being watered by the Infinite  
 The rain drops of bliss  
 Like honey-drops being sprinkled  
 O, you so handsome may understand your value !

You will agree there is vast variety of thought in Puran Singh. The span of imagination is all comprehending. His expression has the capacity to carry a particular volume of thought. He is acquainted with the multifarious attitudes in which Nature prevails. His association with Bhai Vir Singh had grafted the perception that this world is like a garden designed by Providence and the best specimen in humanity are those who are in love with the gracious Supreme.

It is commonly known that Prof. Puran Singh re-entered the domain of Sikhism after coming close to Bhai Vir Singh. Their close association was beneficial in many ways.

There are other poems also in this volume but their consequence being similar they are not being reproduced.

If a particular variety of flowers did not in time appear in his garden the poet would record his longing to have them. He was to welcome the smiling flowers when they were to begin their fine and pleasing display.

He had the occasion to visit Qutab Minar in Delhi and recorded his reactions to the contradictory assertions that it was originally devised by a Hindu monarch and the other one that the Muslim ruler in Delhi Qutab-ud-Din Aibak had got it erected.

There is a dialogue between the goddess of love and the goddess of duty. This poem which seeks to preach the poet's gospel is written out as a sermon.

The goddess of love is reminded that it has in it only the element to seek and enjoy beauty while it is the other goddess which gives the incentive to discharge various responsibilities. This volume is valuable in its own right. The poet was fond of visiting the hill stations. The places which provided conspicuous moments of appreciating significant forms which Nature assumes are mentioned in his compositions. He visited Kasauli and the azure sky providing smiling rays of the sun to the green forests is passionately described in one of the poems. It seems he had seen many seasons there. He described the gifts provided by the incoming of spring and the ravages introduced by autumn. When the leaves become pale and start dropping not only the trees are shorn of them but the green visage all around is also caught under the dry leaves.

Towards the end he describes the parrot weeping in a jungle. He meets those of his kind. There is an interchange of ideas. A discussion in detail follows. The total effect sought to be brought about is that freedom at all times is preferable to all kinds of comforts which captivity may offer. This poem is cited as the poet's message to his countrymen that they should strive to gain freedom.

## **Preert Veena**

### **(The Flute of Love)**

This is a single poem divided into seven parts.

This composition has several aspects. The subtle narration in it does not seem to be entirely a product of imagination. The poet in his childhood may have been listening to the fairy tales which children persuade the elderly relatives to recount before they go to sleep. In Kashmir, the land of charming people living in evergreen environment, Nature has created many attractive lakes. It has many beauty spots. Gulmarg is one of them. This poem speaking of a fairy was written at Gulmarg.

The story in it mentions a despot who wanted to enthrall a sublime dancing ray personified in a feminine self. Providence had devised a matching handsome lover living on the otherside of the lake. Both had their own boats but they were under constant surveillance. They were watched by the guards put on duty by the despot.

The unseen power wanted to unite the true lovers. The poem describes the manner in which the couple ultimately succeeded in getting together.

There is a purposful mandate in the poem. It is that true love always succeeds.

Some of the beautiful outpourings in the poem are noticed here :—

## ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਵੀਣਾ

(੧)

ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ,—  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ,—  
 ਸਾਰਾ ਦਿਨ ਸਨ ਨੱਚਦੀਆਂ ਰਹੀਆਂ.  
 ਨੱਚ ਨੱਚ ਕੇ ਹੁਣ ਥਕ ਥਕ ਪਈਆਂ,  
 ਸੋਹਲ ਜਿੰਦੀਆਂ ਸੁਹਣੀਆਂ ਸਹੀਆਂ  
 ਨੈਣੀ ਨੀਂਦਾਂ ਸਨ ਭਰ ਰਹੀਆਂ,  
 ਛਾਤੀ ਤੇ ਸਿਰ ਰਖ ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ

A complete perception can be made available by reproducing the eminent portions of the poem :—

(੨)

ਸੋਹਣੇ ਨੇ ਹੱਥ ਚਪਾ ਫੜਿਆ  
 ਸੁਬਕ ਪੈਰ ਧਰ ਬਜਰੇ ਵੜਿਆ  
 ਮਾਨੋ ਚੰਦ ਜ਼ਿਮੀਂ ਤੋਂ ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆ  
 ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਮੀਂਹ ਨੂਰੀ ਝੜਿਆ  
 ਫਿਰ ਅਸਮਾਨੀਂ ਤਕ  
 ਆਹਾਂ ਲੈ ਲਈਆਂ ।  
 ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।

...

...

...

ਆਹਾਂ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਅਸਮਾਨੀ ਗਈਆਂ,  
 ਝੜ ਨੂੰ ਕੀਤਾ ਛਈਆਂ ਮਈਆਂ,  
 ਤਾਰਯੋਂ ਲੋ ਲੈ ਹੇਠਾਂ ਆਈਆਂ,  
 ਲੋ ਚਾਦਰ ਆ ਨੀਰ ਵਿਛਈਆਂ

ਕਿਸਤੀ ਖੁਲ੍ਹੀ ਤੜੱਕ  
 ਰਸਤੇ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ,  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ—,  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।

ਸੁਹਣਾ ਸਹਿਮ ਮਲਕੜੇ ਲਾਏ  
 ਇਕ ਚੱਪਾ ਫਿਰ ਹਥ ਟਿਕਾਏ,  
 ਕੰਨ ਓਪਰਾ ਮਤ ਸ਼ਕ ਖਾਏ :—  
 ਏਸ ਸਮੇਂ ਕੋਈ ਨਾਉਂ ਤਰਾਏ  
 ਸੋਚਾਂ ਸੰਸੇ ਸ਼ਕ  
 ਸੀਨੇ ਛੈ ਰਹੀਆਂ ।  
 ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ—,  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।

(੩)

ਸੁਤੇ ਕੰਨਾਂ ਬਿੜਕ ਨਾ ਪਾਈ  
 ਪਰ ਜਿਨ ਨੈਣੀ ਨੀਂਦ ਨਾ ਆਈ  
 ਤਾਰ ਨਾਲ ਦਿਲ ਤਰਬ ਮਿਲਾਈ  
 ਇੱਕ ਸੁਰ ਹੋ ਇਕ ਜਾਨ ਕਰਾਈ  
 ਉਨ ਕੰਨੀ ਬਿਨ ਝੱਕ  
 ਵਾਜ਼ਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।

ਉੱਠ ਮਲਕੜੇ ਬਾਹਰ ਆਵੇ,  
 ਖੜੀ ਕਿਨਾਰੇ ਕੰਨ ਲਗਾਵੇ,  
 ਸੱਦ ਮਾਹੀ ਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਸੁਣਾਵੇ,  
 ਮਧਮ ਹਿਲ ਪਈ ਥਰੱਰਾਵੇ,  
 ਸੁਣ 'ਦਿਲ ਤਰਬਾਂ' ਪੱਕ

ਥਰੋਰ ਥਰੋ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।  
 ਕੰਬਦੇ ਪੈਰ ਮਲਕੜੇ ਉਤਰੇ  
 ਸੁੰਹਣੀ ਬੈਠ ਗਈ ਵਿੱਚ ਬਜਰੇ  
 ਲਾਇ ਨਾ ਚਪਾ, ਦਿਲ ਕਹਿ, “ਚਲ ਰੇ”  
 ਦੂਰ ਵਾਜ ਤੇ ਕੰਨ ਸਨ ਲਗ ਰੈ,  
 ਦਿਲ-ਸੱਦਾਂ ਲਯਾਂ ਲੱਖ  
 ਦਿਲ ਨੂੰ ਲੈ ਗਈਆਂ ।  
 ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ ।  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ—,  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।

(੪)

ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਬੇੜੀ ਟੁਰ ਪਈ  
 ਕੀਕੂੰ ਵਲ ਸਜਨ ਦੇ ਮੁੜ ਪਈ.  
 ਬੇੜੀ ਮਿਲ ਬੇੜੀ ਨੂੰ ਜੁੜ ਗਈ,  
 ਦੋ ਜਾਨਾਂ ਮਿਲ ਇੱਕ  
 ਇਕੋ ਹੋ ਗਈਆਂ ।  
 ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
 ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।  
 ਇਕ ਕਿਸਤੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੁਇ ਇਕ ਹੋਏ,  
 ਬੇ ਖੁਦੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਗੋਦੀ ਸੋਏ,  
 ਲਿਵ ਦੀ ਸਾਂਝੀ ਤਾਰ ਪੁੱਏ,  
 ਰੰਗ ਰਤੇ ਰਸ ਰੰਗ ਸਮੋਏ,  
 ਮਸਤੀਆਂ ਕੁਛੜ ਚੱਕ  
 ਅਰਸ਼ੀ ਲੈ ਗਈਆਂ ।

ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ  
ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ  
ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।

The fairy tale unites the lover and the beloved in such a combine that their union causes an intriguing merger. When the search is made in the morning the couple remains untraced. One of the empty boats is discovered. At the end of the sixth stanza the comment is :—

“ਇਹ ਬਜਰਾ ਖਾਲੀ ਮੁੜ ਆਇਆ  
ਉਹ ਪਰੀਆਂ ਕੁਹ ਕਾਫ਼ ਪੁਚਾਇਆ  
ਜ਼ਾਲਮ ਹਥੋਂ ਦੁਹਾਂ ਬਚਾਇਆ  
“ਸੱਚ-ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸਿਰ ਧੁਰ ਦਾ ਛਾਇਆ ।”  
ਜਾਣ ਗਏ ਗਲ ਪੱਕ :  
“ਪਰੀਆਂ ਲੈ ਗਈਆਂ”  
ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ  
ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ  
ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।

The seventh stanza attains the climax :—

ਖੋਜ ਕੁਈ ਅੱਜ ਤੀਕ ਨਾ ਪਾਵੇ  
“ਕਦੇ” ਕੁਈ ਪਰ ਆਖ ਸੁਣਾਵੇ :—  
ਚੰਦ ਰਾਤ ਜੱਦ ਜਲ ਟਿਕ ਜਾਵੇ,  
ਜਿਉਂ ਕਾ ਤਿਉਂ ਬਜਰਾ ਦਿਸ ਆਵੇ  
ਪਰੀਆਂ ਦਾ ਝਰਮਟ  
ਨਾਚ ਨਚੇ ਰਹੀਆਂ”  
ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ  
ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ  
ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਨੇ ਲੱਗ  
ਲਹਿਰਾਂ ਸੈਂ ਗਈਆਂ ।

The poem ends and affirms that the poet had participated in the actions performed in some of the scenes enacted in a drama in a fairy land.

The quotations produced above exhibit the picture as under :—

## 1

The afternoon has come  
 The waves have gone to sleep  
 Clinging to the breast of water  
 The waves have gone to sleep !  
 They kept dancing during the whole day  
 Having danced they are now exhausted  
 Soft limbed beautiful friends  
 With eyes full of a spell of sleep.  
 Reclining on the chest the waves have gone to sleep  
 The afternoon has come !

## 2

With his pleasing appearance he took the oar in his hand  
 Light-footedly he entered the boat  
 It seemed the moon had arisen out of earth  
 From his looks ray's of light were raining  
 Then he looked up at the skies  
 He heaved deep sighs  
 The afternoon sorted out itself  
 The waves went to sleep  
 Clinging to the lake's surface  
 The waves went to sleep.

The sighs soared into the skies  
 The clouds were dispersed by them  
 They brought down the rays from the stars  
 The sheet of light covered the waters  
 At once the boat was set free  
 It set on its course  
 The afternoon deepened  
 The waves went to sleep  
 Reclining on the surface of the water  
 The waves went to sleep.



The fair-one discarded apprehension  
 Gave a careful stroke with the oar  
 So that no other ear may hear doubtfully  
 That a boat was in movement  
 Many thoughts, apprehensions and doubts  
 Were occupying his mind  
 The afternoon shades continued  
 The waves went to sleep  
 Clinging to the chest of the lake-water  
 The waves went to sleep.

## 3

The sleeping ears did not hear any move  
 But the eyes which kept awake perceived  
 Through a wave length, the heart-beats  
 Which had turned two lives into one.  
 Without hinderance the anxious ears became attentive  
 The afternoon kept its atmosphere  
 The waves kept sleeping  
 Clamped to the surface of waters  
 The waves kept on sleeping.

Softly she got up and came out  
 Standing on the edge listened in alertness  
 The lovers voice was inaudible  
 The waters were, slightly shivering  
 Listening to that the cords of love in the heart  
 Incured a quiver unique in vibration !  
 The afternoon had come to stay  
 The waves had gone to sleep  
 Clinging to the surface of the waters  
 The waves had gone to sleep !

The trembling feet noiselessly moved  
 The fairy occupied her seat in her boat  
 She did not use the oar but the heart commanded : "move on"  
 The ears were caught up with the voice far off

The affectionate heart-beats became aware  
 The heart was lifted in that direction  
 The afternoon shades prevailed  
 The waves went to sleep  
 Reclining on the crest of the waters  
 The waves went to sleep !

## 4

It is difficult to estimate how the boat began to move  
 How was it that it turned in the lover's direction  
 The boat met the other boat and joined it  
 Two living beings met in unison  
 They amalgamated into each other  
 The afternoon continued protectively  
 The waves went to sleep  
 Spreading out on the crest of water  
 The waves went to sleep !

In one of the boats they became one  
 Went into a state of inebriation  
 Joined in their common concentrated urge  
 Caught in divine colour saturated with sublimity  
 The exhilarating waves lifted them in their lap  
 Took them into heavenly regions  
 The afternoon came to stay  
 The waves went to sleep  
 Reclining on the water's crest  
 The waves continued in their sleep.

True love had succeeded. A unique unification had been attained. Providence had helped the lovers in effecting an escape which baffled those who had been keeping them apart.

The poem imparts the inspiration that if your devotion is absolutely sincere then inspite of all hurdles you are bound to get a matching response from the one whom you love.

While closing the Sixth stanza the poet narrated :—

This boat returned empty  
 The other, the fairies transported to Cacassious  
 Both the lovers were placed beyond the tyrant's reach  
 True love enjoys everlasting protection  
 Every body realized the hard truth :  
 "The invisible fairies had decamped with the lovers  
 The evening glades continued their hold  
 The waves went to sleep  
 On the surface of the waters  
 The waves went to sleep.

The seventh stanza, finally drawing the curtain states :—

No body has till today discovered them  
 Sometimes some one even then declares—  
 "On a moonlit night when the water is calm  
 In its very original form the boat is visible  
 A concurrence of fairies  
 Performing dances !"  
 The afternoon has set in  
 The waves have gone to sleep  
 Clapsed on the crest of waters  
 The waves have gone to sleep.

This single composition is separately enshrined in this volume.

In beautiful surroundings the poet could entertain in his imagination the participation by legendary fairies in human affairs.

Bhai Vir Singh's aim was to inculcate that truth always wins. A true devotion, facing heavy odds was bound to gain unification.

## The Vibrating Elbow !

Bhai Vir Singh was kind enough in devising an introduction to this volume.

He has examined an intricate aspect of Sikh religion. The ten gurus insisted that there should be an eternal vibration of song in praise of the Divine Master. The "Gurbani" in Guru Granth Sahib is put to musical modulations of the voice. The singing is accompanied by instrumental music. The Gurbani is the praise of God in verse.

The poet enunciated that at the highest pedestal is providence. To a devoted Sikh next to God comes his Sat Guru. It is the guru who introduces the mind of the "Sikh" to God. It is but natural that the Sikh will sing in praise of his guru as well. This volume contains the compositions which are vibrating with homage to the Creator.

The first composition in it symbolically indicates as to why the book is named as the Vibrating Elbow. The divine beloved is elusive. The effort to clasp him keeps the elbow in affectionate vibration.

The first poem occurs in "Matak Hulare" and while dealing with the contents of that volume it stands translated under the heading "The quivering elbow".

The poet had been, from time to time recording his songs devoted to the Sikh gurus. Good deal of effort must have been employed in selecting the rhymes which were to be in conformity with precise Ragas, i.e., measures.

The opening song is.

ਅਰਸੀ ਸੱਦ

ਸਾਰੇ ਜਾ ਜਪਾਈਂ ਮੇਰਾ ਨਾਮ  
 ਥਾਂ ਥਾਂ ਜਾਵੀਂ ਪਿਲਾਵੀਂ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਜਾਮ  
 ਟੁਟੀ ਨੂੰ ਗੰਢੀਂ ਤੇ ਵਿਛੁੜੀ ਮਿਲਾਈਂ  
 ਦੇਵੀਂ ਜੀਅ ਦਾਨ, ਤੂੰ ਕਰੀਂ ਏ ਕਾਮ ।

### MANDATE FROM HEAVENS

You move in all directions  
 And tell the people to remember me  
 You may move from place to place  
 Let the people drink the cups of nectar  
 Those who have broken off make them join back  
 Those who have parted company may return  
 Impart fresh blissful life  
 You should accomplish this mission !

The mandate to Guru Nanak Dev Ji surely was that he should devote his whole life in reinculcating the presence of the Lord of the universe with all men and women. Perhaps the poet designedly reminded the followers of Guru Nanak Dev Ji that they were under an obligation to recite Gurbani and to take to meditation.

The song was in "Rag Puria". Bhai Sahib was aware of the intricate demarcations classifying the different musical measures.

In this volume all compositions are arranged under distinct musical measures. The singers were to follow the instructions inherent in the arrangement.

As explained above on the highest pedestal was the Creator inspiring his own worship. Next to him were the great Gurus who by actual performance preached as to how life was to be lived. Bhai Sahib was in love with both. In one of his songs inspired by Guru Gobind Singh Ji, he wrote :

ਕਲਗੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਦਾ ਮਾਲ

ਸੁਹਣਿਆਂ ਵੇ ਅੱਜ ਪਾ ਜਾਈਂ ਫੇਰਾ ।  
 ਹਾਰ ਗਈਆਂ ਨਿਤ ਕਰਦੀ ਮੈਂ ਜੇਰਾ ।  
 ਮੈਂ ਜਾਸਾਂ ਨੀ ਮਾਏ ਹੁਣ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ,  
 ਮੈਨੂੰ ਹੋੜ ਨਾ ਮਾਏ ਦੂਣੀ ਅੱਗ ਨਾ ਬਾਲ ।  
 ਮੇਰਾ ਤਨ ਮਨ ਧਨ ਸਭ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਦਾ ਮਾਲ,  
 ਉਸ ਸੋਹਣੇ ਦਾ ਮਾਲ ਕਲਗੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਦਾ ਮਾਲ ।

### THE PROPERTY OF KALGIWALA

O you the valiant handsome pay me a visit today  
 The fortitude exercised everyday stands defeated  
 O my mother I will go away now with my "Satguru"  
 Do not restrain me O' mother, do not incite more fire  
 My body, my mind, everything belongs to Satguru  
 The property of that valiant one the property of "Kalgiwala".

Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Khalsa used to wear a plume in his turban. He used to ride a sky coloured steed. He is known as "Kalgiwala" which means the one wearing a plume in his turban.

The poet supplicates that the valiant handsome Kalgiwala may pay him a visit. He records that he has been longing for a glimpse of the beloved. He prays that the beloved may come and take over everything because all belongings were his.

In this volume there are many poems dedicated to the Tenth Guru. At short intervals the poet continued to enjoy the refreshing love which the tenth lord bestowed upon him. Every poem, although having similar thoughts, was full of sincere repercussions.

Let us enjoy another specimen :

ਦਿਲ ਲਗ ਗਿਆ ਸ਼ਹਿਨਸ਼ਾਹ ਨਾਲ

ਉਸ ਕਲਗੀਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹ  
 ਤੇ ਦੀਨ ਦੁਨੀ ਦੇ ਰਾਹ ਨਾਲ,

ਜਿਨ ਇਕੋ ਸਨਤ ਮੋਹਿ ਲਿਆ  
 ਬੰਨ੍ਹ ਲੀਤਾ ਇਕ ਨਿਗਾਹ ਨਾਲ:  
 ਕਰ ਲੀਤਾ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਆਪਣਿਆ  
 ਦੇ ਪੁੰਜੀ ਨਾਮ-ਵਿਸਾਹ ਨਾਲ,  
 ਕੁਈ ਅੰਦਰ ਖਿਚਾਂ ਪਾਈਆਂ  
 ਜਿੰਦ ਫੂਕੀ ਆਪਣੇ ਸਾਹ ਨਾਲ ।

### THE HEART IS ATTUNED TO THE EMPEROR

That monarch wearing the plume  
 He who guides through the domain of religion  
 He who has with one glance captivated me  
 Has acquired me as his own  
 By conferring the wealth of meditation  
 Has excited intense longing in me  
 With single emission of his breath has kindled life in me !

This poem does not have its source in mere devotion. There is a deep personal touch. The vibrations of this kind take birth only out of undying love.

These poems create the impression that Bhai Vir Singh was striving emulously to gain the same stature in actual affection which some of those personages had who were fortunate in living through the life and times of Guru Gobind Singh Ji.

The Tenth Guru had an inherent quality which magnetized all those who ever saw him. Even after departing from earth he is the focal point of attraction for countless individuals.

At all times whenever the poet remembered him, the tenth Master inspired fresh compositions. In one of them the poet expressed—

ਕਲਗੀਆਂ ਵਾਲਾ ਪਾਪ ਹਰੇ  
 ਸੋਹਣੀ ਸੂਰਤ ਰੰਗ ਮਤਵਾਲਾ, ਕਲਗੀ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਸੀਸ ਧਰੇ,  
 ਨੈਣ ਜਲਾਲੀ ਮਿਹਰਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ. ਮਸਤਕ ਨੂਰੋ ਨੂਰ ਝਰੇ  
 ਮੁਸਕਾਹਟ ਬੁਲਾਂ ਦੀ ਤਕੋ, ਹਿਰਦਾ ਤਕਦਿਆਂ ਸਾਰ ਠਰੇ ।  
 ਫਬਨ ਅਨੋਖੀ ਛਬਿ ਹਿਰਦੇ ਦੀ, ਛਬੀ ਛਬੀ ਤੇ ਮਾਨ ਕਰੇ ।



ਮਾਨ ਕਰੇ ਜੋ ਇਸ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਤੇ, ਜਨਮ ਜਨਮ ਦੇ ਪਾਪ ਹਰੇ,  
 ਰੱਬੀ ਰੂਪ ਇਲਾਹੀ ਦਰਸਨ, ਜੋ ਪਾਵੇ ਭਵ ਸਿੰਧ ਤਰੇ !  
 ਕਰ ਅਰਦਾਸ : 'ਸ਼ਰਨ ਇਹ ਸ੍ਵਾਮੀ, ਚਰਨ ਸ਼ਰਨ ਰਖ  
 ਸਦਾ ਹਰੇ ।

### THE LORD WEARING THE PLUME MAY EXCUSE MY SINS !

With a charming face, enchanting colour,  
 He has a plume on him  
 The resplendent eyes full of kindness,  
     the forehead shedding light  
 Look at the smile on his lips, the glimpse will impart bliss  
 A strange elegance in personality,  
 The embellishment proud of itself  
 He who will have faith in this beloved  
 Will be relieved of sins in all past lives !  
 A gracious appearance, a Godly presence  
 He who would imbibe, would cross the tide of fears !  
 Pray to him : "Grant me protection,  
 Keep me at your divine feet ever more".

How could any one describe the personal charm in any one without closely observing the person many times ? How could one see the other when the centuries stood between the two parting them ? Can a poet's imagination arise to such cool calculating heights so as to photographically capture the physical charm of the beloved?

Everyone has to find his own answer to these questions. It may, however, be safely concluded that intense love is capable of exalting the mind and conferring on it the distinction of estimating bright images out of the past.

It was the eye inspired by unerring devotion which in deep meditation many times saw the beloved. The love for the divine master is every moment unique. In Bhai Vir Singh, longing for a glimpse of Guru Gobind Singh was tremendous.



Guru Nanak Dev Ji was also a great centre of attraction. Some of the opening lines of a poem in respect of according a welcome to him are as under :—

ਇੱਕ ਸਯਾਮ ਘਟਾ ਛਾਈ, ਓਦਾਸ ਨਜ਼ਰ ਆਈ  
ਹਾਂ ਸਹਿਮ ਪਿਆ ਬਰਸੇ, ਝੜਿ ਛਾਈ ਝੜੀ ਲਾਈ :  
ਸਤ ਰੰਗ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਚਮਕੇ, ਇੱਕ ਪੀਘ ਤੁਸਾਂ ਪਾਈ  
ਵਾ ਦਮਕ ਪਈ ਕਾਲਕ, ਮਿਟ ਨਾਲ ਗਈ ਕਾਈ ।

A sky-coloured sheet of clouds looked sad  
The fearfully dripping deepened and it began to rain hard  
Then you brightened up in seven colours, in a rainbow !  
The darkness was caught in glow, dispelling all gloom !

Guru Nanak Dev Ji came in an age when the very protectors of public peace had become its enemies. There was darkness pervading all around. India was in bondage. The people had been demoralised because of several invasions which the country had suffered. His advent started an everlasting phenomenon. The dynastic intrusion by Babur was terminated by the British. Sikhism of which Guru Nanak Dev is the founder continues to prosper. It is a distinct religion and has its followers everywhere in the world. It reached the height of perfection when in April 1699 Guru Gobind Singh Ji baptised the Sikhs at Anandpur Sahib and the next day supplicated that he also be baptised. The Sikhs became "Singhs". Bhai Daya Ram, who was the first to be baptised became Daya Singh. There are injunctions issued at the time of baptisim which everyone who is baptised, has to observe.

Bhai Vir Singh wrote extensively about all the Sikh Gurus in prose. A unique contribution, however, is his exposition of Guru Nanak Devji's mission in his prose-work known as "Guru Nanak Chamatkar". "Chamatkar" means miracle. The big book narrates the life-story of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and is full of appropriate freerences to Gurbani. Gurbani is the "word of God" disbursed through the Guru.

Writing similarly about the tenth Guru Bhai Vir Singh produced an equally conspicuous compilation which was published under the name "Kalghi Dhar Chamatkar"

Bhai Sahib knew many languages and in his life time produced an authentic exposition of a major opening portion of Guru Granth Sahib. The work was completed ultimately by his learned brother Dr. Balbir Singh.

The volume, which is being dealt with here contains some compositions regarding Guru Nanak Dev Ji. In one of them, the poet entreated :

ਮਿਲ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਯਾਰਿਆ

ਮੈਂ ਤਕਦੀ ਤਕਦੀ ਵਾਰੀਆਂ,  
 ਮੈਂ ਸਦਕੇ ਜਾਵਾਂ ਸਾਰੀਆਂ  
 ਹੁਣ ਆ ਜਾ ਰਬ ਸੁਆਰਿਆ !  
 ਮਿਲ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਯਾਰਿਆ !  
 ਸਿਕ ਸਿਕਦੀ ਲੋਚਾਂ ਲੋਚਦੀ,  
 ਨਿਤ ਦਰਸਨ ਸੋਚਾਂ ਸੋਚਦੀ,  
 ਤੈਂ ਦਰਸਨ ਤੋਂ ਜੀ ਵਾਰਿਆ,  
 ਮਿਲ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਯਾਰਿਆ ।  
 ਨਿਤ ਤਰਸ ਤਰਸ ਕੇ ਹੁਣੀਆਂ  
 ਮੈਂ ਬਿਰਹੋਂ ਨੇ ਫੜ ਕੁਠੀਆ  
 ਜੀ ਹਾਵਿਆਂ ਨੇ ਹੈ ਗਾਰਿਆ  
 ਮਿਲ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਨਾਨਕ ਪਿਯਾਰਿਆ ।

#### DEAR SATGURU NANAK COME TO ME

I have been intently looking for you  
 I am reverentially dedicated to you  
 Now come to me O you the God's chosen one  
 Kindly come to me dear Sat Guru Nanak  
 All the while pining for you I have been nursing desires  
 Every day listing for seeing you  
 My existence is sustained by the desire to behold

Please come to me dear Guru Nanak  
 The intense longing everyday is causing strain  
 This separation is tormenting me  
 The mind is grilled by lamentation  
 Kindly come to me dear Sri Gur, Nanak !

When your spirit is caught in deep affection your longing goes on changing its shades. Sometimes you are confident that you will find solace. Sometimes you are despondent. Sometimes there is a warm impact. Sometimes your yearning begins to seek solace. Howsoever reverentially dedicated you are, life certainly demands that all the desires which arise may attain some satisfaction.

Many of their devotees throughout the centuries have had affectionate veneration for Guru Nanak Devji and Guru Gobind Singh Ji. All of them were neither poets nor writers. Bhai Vir Singh had a highly expressive pen in his hand. He had a distinguished command over the language. The muse was kind to him.

Rai Bular was the name of the local chieftain of Talwandi, the small township, where Guru Nanak Devji was born. The place, presently in Pakistan, came to be called Nankana Sahib.

The Muslim chieftain Rai Bular watched Guru Nanak Devji's childhood. He became a great admirer. For long years Guru Nanak had to remain away from Talwandi. Like many others Rai Bular also had the great desire that the bright faced enigmatic personality may return to cheer up the inhabitants in the principality. The poet's imagination began to sort out the thoughts which may have occupied the mind of Rai Bular. In a fresh strain the poet recorded the yearning in Rai Bular. Several poems pertain to it. The opening lines in one of them are reproduced hereunder :

### ਰਾਇ ਬੁਲਾਰ ਦਾ ਬਿਰਹਾ

ਬਾਰਾਂ ਹੀ ਬਰਸ ਬੀਤੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਬਿਦੇਸ ਧਾਏ ।  
ਆਇਆ ਨਾ ਸੁਖ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ ਧੌਲੇ ਹੋ ਕੇਸ ਆਏ ।  
ਉਮਰਾਂ ਦਾ ਸੂਰ ਢਲਿਆ ਪਾਸਾ ਨਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਫਿਰਿਆ ।  
ਰੋ ਰੋ ਵਰ੍ਹੇ ਵਿਹਾਏ, ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਨਾ ਦੇਸ ਆਏ ।  
ਆਵੋ ਕਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਆਵੋ ਪਯਾਰੇ ਦਰਸ ਦਿਖਾਵੋ ।  
ਆਖਾਂ ਕਦੀ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਬੀ : ‘ਪਯਾਰੇ ਸੁਦੇਸ਼ ਆਏ’ ।  
ਤਰਸਨ ਤੇ ਨੈਣ ਪਯਾਸੇ, ਦਰਸਨ ਦਾ ਨੀਰ ਭਾਲਣ  
ਪਰਸਨ ਚਰਨ ਕਮਲ ਨੂੰ ਫਿਰਦੇ ਵਿਸ਼ੇਸ਼ ਧਾਏ ।  
ਹਿਰਦਾ ਉਛਲਦਾ ਰਹਿੰਦਾ ਕੰਬੇ ਕਲਜੜਾ ਏ,  
ਤਾਂਘੇ ਸੁਣਨ ਸੁਨੇਹਾ “ਤੇਰੇ ਨਰੇਸ਼ ਆਏ” ।

### THE YEARNING IN RAI BULAR

Twelve years ago the beloved went abroad  
No pleasing message ; my hair have gone grey  
Life's sun is setting, love has not been reciprocated  
Years have been spent weeping, the beloved has not come  
home  
O' come back dear, for once let us behold you  
I should be able to declare, "The dear one has come to his  
place"  
These thirsting eyes seeking the tears of joyful return  
May have the divine touch of your feet; my eyes are searching  
The mind keeps leaping, the inner self is vibrating,  
There is intense desire to hear, "your Sovereign has come!"

In order to carry out his mission Guru Nanak Devji performed long 'journies'. He went to different regions in this country. At one time he spent many days preaching to the people in Assam. He also travelled down South and visited an island called Sangladeep. He was able go to Mecca. We have a shrine in Baghdad which is associated with him.

The word of God *i.e.*, Gurbani was produced through his pen in several intricate rhymed measures. He was the harbinger

of all that which is contained in Guru Granth Sahib, which is the eleventh and final Guru of the Sikhs.

His absence from his abode was each time spread over long years. Those who admired him and those who loved him really longed to see him. Rai Bular must have been one of them. His feelings in terms of the poet's perception are recorded in the poem quoted above.

Time keeps on moving relentlessly. It is stated in the opening lines that twelve years of separation were the foundation of the yearning in Rai Bular. His youth was left behind. He was going grey. His desire to have further close association with the Guru was natural. It ought to be appreciated that Bhai Vir Singh's personal affection was producing its echo in the poem.

Most of these poems, as stated earlier are either concerned with Guru Nanak Devji or with Guru Gobind Singhji.

At Patna, where Guru Gobind Singhji was born, lived a royal couple Raja Fateh Chand and his queen. They did not have a child. They were in constant prayers that God may bless them with a son. The divine child in the profile of Guru Gobind Singh could easily decipher that the couple was caught in an agonising desire that they should have a son. He wanted to relieve them of their mental pain. He gave a sudden surprise to them by settling into the lap of the queen and smilingly telling her that there was her son in her lap. The couple was inebriated with joy. An enduring affection began to prosper. Then came the hour when the parting had to take place. The entire family had to leave Patna for going to Anandpur Sahib. The poet has produced in this volume a composition reflecting the repercussions in Raja Fateh Chand and his queen.

The poem is :—

ਦਸਮੇਸ਼ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਵੇਲੇ ਫਤਹ ਚੰਦ ਤੇ  
ਰਾਣੀ ਦੀ ਬਿਰਹਾ

ਲੜ ਨਾ ਛੁਡਾ ਸਿਧਾਵੋ ਸਾਡੇ ਸਿਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਸਾਈਂ,  
ਚਰਨਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਾਂ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ ਡੂੰਘੀ ਹੈ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਪਾਈ।  
ਭੋਰੇ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਮੁਖ ਕਿਯੋਂ ਲੁਕਾਵੰਦੇ ਹੋ,  
ਨਿੰਹੁ ਲਾ ਕੇ ਹਾਏ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ ਛਿਪਦੇ ਹੋ ਹੁਣ ਕਿਦਾਈ।  
ਡੇਰਾ ਲਗਾ ਕੇ ਅੰਦਰ ਮੰਦਰ ਬਣਾ ਕੇ ਦਿਲ ਨੂੰ।  
ਮੁੰਝੇ ਏ ਛਡ ਕੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹੋ ਕਿਉਂ ਗੁਸਾਈ ?  
ਬਣ ਜਿੰਦ ਦੀ ਏ ਜਿੰਦੇ, ਹੁਣ ਜਾਵੰਦੇ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੋ  
ਜਿੰਦ ਕਢ ਲੈ ਚਲੇ ਹੋ, ਨਿਰਜਿੰਦ ਛਡ ਸਾਈਂ।  
ਤਨ ਜਿੰਦ ਬਿਨ ਨਾ ਜੀਵੇ, ਜਿੰਦ ਆਪ ਬਿਨ ਨਾ ਰਹਿੰਦੀ  
ਵਿਛੁੜਨ ਜੇ ਆਪਦਾ ਹੈ ਦੂਹਰੀ ਹੈ ਮੌਤ ਆਈ  
ਹੋਏ ਜੇ ਆਪ ਜੋਗੇ, “ਹੁਣ ਹੋਏ ਆਪ ਦੇ ਹਾਂ”  
ਆਪਣੇ ਨੂੰ ਹਾਏ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ, ਸਟੋ ਨਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਜੁਦਾਈ।

**AT THE TIME OF DEPARTURE OF “DASMESHJI” THE  
BEWAILMENT OF FATEH CHAND AND HIS QUEEN**

Do not release your garment from our grasp,  
O, you the protector of our existence ;  
Do not disengage us from thy feet,  
We are caught in deep love  
Having turned us into keen admirers  
Do not conceal your Countenance  
After entwining us in love, O beloved  
Wherefore are you going to hide ?  
Having made your abode inside us  
Having turned our hearts into a temple  
Leaving us down hearted and forsaken  
Why are you, O, our protector deserting us ?  
Having become the soul of our existence  
Assuring that you will not abjure us  
You are going to extract life out of us  
Leaving us completely lifeless  
The body cannot live without life



And life will lose sustenance without you  
 The parting with you  
 Is like dying twice over !  
 We who came to be yours  
 Are dedicated to you  
 He who is "yours" O beloved  
 Should not be consigned to Separation !

"Dasmesh Ji", another name for Guru Gobind Singhji, possessed a personality full of magnetic charm. The magical spell of his presence is ever living. Its efficiency defies time and space. There are many who have in recent times experienced his presence with them. In moments of quiet contemplation he has nourished in many the fortitude to perform Supreme sacrifice.

Raja Fateh Chand and his queen were replenished with achievement when the divine child sitting in her lap told the queen that the child for getting whom she had been praying had come to her. An everlasting love came to stay. It has become historical.

At the time when the entire family was to leave Patna for Anand Pur Sahib an unavoidable occasion causing separation with those who were to remain behind arose.

The torment which Raja Fateh Chand and his queen had to undergo is brilliantly described in this poem. Bhai Vir Singh was able to do that for a particular reason. The reason was that he himself was in great love with the tenth Master.

Some of the opening lines in another poem may be noticed. The warbling in the rest of that composition is similar. The quoted portion is :

ਆ ਮਿਲ !

ਆ ਮਿਲ ਕਲਗੀਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ  
 ਤੈਂ ਬਿਨ ਖਰੀ ਨਿਮਾਣੀ ਹਾਂ ।  
 ਵੇਦਨ ਦਿਲ ਦੀ ਕਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਦਸਾਂ,  
 ਅਪਣਿਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਬੇਗਾਨੀ ਹਾਂ ।

ਖਲੀ ਤਕਾਵਾਂ ਵਾਟਾਂ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ  
 ਦੇ ਝਲਕਾਂ ਜਿਸ ਰਾਹ ਗਏ,  
 “ਹੁਣ ਆਏ ਹੁਣ ਆਏ!” ਲੋਚਾਂ  
 ਵਿੱਚ ਉਡੀਕ ਰਹਾਨੀ ਹਾਂ ।  
 ਵਾਂਗ ਸੁਦਾਈਆਂ ਫਿਰਾਂ ਕੂਕਦੀ  
 ਬਨ ਬੇਲੇ ਬਲ ਢੂੰਡਾਂ ਮੈਂ  
 ਘਰ ਬੈਠਾਂ ਤਾਂ ਤਕਾਂ ਬੂਹੇ  
 ਕਾਵਾਂ ਪਈ ਉਡਾਨੀ ਹਾਂ ।

### PLEASE COME TO ME !

O, visit me, the beloved Lord wearing the Plume  
 I am in great want without you !  
 Whom can I appraise about the longing in my heart  
 I am a foreigner amongst those to whom I belong  
 I am keeping an anxious watch, Satguru,  
 You gave a glimpse and went away  
 “You will come Just now, Just now” I am eager  
 I am constantly expecting your return  
 Like mad people I am clamouring  
 Searching through forests and mazes  
 Sitting at home I keep on looking at the door  
 I am dispersing the crows in different directions !

There is a limit to every thing. In case of Bhai Vir Singh there was no limit to his love for Guru Nanak Devji and Guru Gobind Singhji. Guru Gobind Singhji combined in himself temporal as well as spiritual authority. He would wear a precious plume in his turban. He would wear several necklaces. His attire was at all times regal.

In this poem, the poet has inserted many aspects of the incessant thirst for the beloved. The innocent intensity depicted in the poem equates imaginary feelings with actual performance in life.

There is a composition which follows an introduction by the poet. It is stated that on his way to Mecca, Guru Nanak Dev Ji



stayed at Karachi. A session of the Sikh educational conference was held there. During his visit to Karachi in that connection the poet went to the spot where a shrine stands commemorating the visit by Guru Nanak. It is disclosed that the visit to that shrine inspired the following song :

ਇਥੇ ਬੈਠ ਗਿਆ

ਪ੍ਰਸ਼ਨ : ਇਥੇ ਬੈਠ ਗਿਆ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਾਈਂ ?  
 ਦਸੋ ਸਹੀਓ ! ਏਥੇ ਹੀ ਸੀ ਮਕੇ ਜਾਂਦਿਆਂ ਜਿਥੇ  
 ਗੁਰੂ ਨਾਨਕ ਓ ਨੂਰ ਅਰਸ਼ ਦਾ  
 ਬੈਠ ਗਿਆ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਾਈਂ ?

ਉੱਤਰ : ਏਥੇ ਹੀ ਹਾਂ, ਏਥੇ ਹੀ ਸੀ ਬੈਠ ਗਿਆ ਤੇਰਾ  
 ਸਾਈਂ  
 ਪਰ ਤੂੰ ਪਛੜ ਪਛੜ ਕੇ ਆਈ  
 ਟੁਰ ਗਿਆ ਤੇਰਾ ਸਾਈਂ ।

ਸੁਕਰਾਨਾ : ਪਛੜ ਪਛੜ ਕੇ ਆਈ ਸਹੀਓ  
 ਪਛੜ ਪਛੜ ਸੱਚ ਆਈ ।  
 ਸੁਕਰ ਸੁਕਰ ਆ ਪਹੁੰਚੀ ਆਖਰ  
 ਚਰਨ ਧੂੜਿ ਮੁਖ ਲਾਈ ।  
 ਵੇਲੇ ਸਿਰ ਆ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਜੇਕਰ  
 ਵੇਖ ਵੇਖ ਠਰ ਜਾਂਦੀ ।  
 ਸੋਇ ਸੁਣਦੀ ਹੁਣ ਸੁਖ ਮਾਣਾ  
 ਸੁਣ ਸੁਣ ਜਸ ਠਰ ਜਾਈਂ ।

It is rendered as under :

### HE SAT HERE

#### Question :

Is it correct that my Gracious Lord sat here ?

O, tell me maids, was this the place where while going to Mecca

Guru Nanak, the embodiment of heavenly light took rest ?

**Answer :**

Yes this is the place where  
 Your Gracious Lord had taken rest  
 But you have come after great delay  
 Your Gracious Lord has gone away !

**In thankfulness :**

I have come after great delay  
 It is true I have come after great delay  
 I am gratified that at last I have come here  
 Have been able to besmear my face  
 With dust sanctified by his feet  
 Had I been able to reach in time  
 I would have been delighted on seeing him  
 I get pleasure now on learning of his visit  
 Listening to the homage being paid to him  
 I am filled with rapture !

Many people had gone to Karachi. The poet preserved for the readers the musical vibrations which he experienced. The place visited by Guru Nanak retained the divine touch only for those who could entertain undying affection for him.

There is a poem which calls upon the individual to be conscious of the spiritual responsibility which life imposes. This enchanting environment is not a perpetual companion. The attachment to this passing show would be in total disregard of the reality that all this is caught in a process of vanishing away. The poem is :

ਉਠ ਜਾਗ, ਜਾਗ ਬਹਿ ਜਾ

ਮਾਲੀ ਹੀ ਫੁਲ ਲਗਾਂਦਾ ਮਾਲੀ ਹੀ ਪਾਲਦਾ ਹੈ,  
 ਮਾਲੀ ਹੀ ਕਟ ਸਾਖੋਂ ਕਰ ਵਖ ਵਿਖਾਲਦਾ ਹੈ ।  
 ਵਿੱਚ ਫੁਲਦਾਨ ਚਿਣਦਾ, ਫੁਲਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਹੈ ਸਜਾਂਦਾ,  
 ਆਪੇ ਹੀ ਫੁਲਦਾਨੋਂ ਫਿਰ ਦੂਰ ਹੈ ਕਰਾਂਦਾ ।  
 ਗਾਫਲ ਤੂੰ ਕਿਉਂ ਨਾ ਸੋਚੇਂ ਰਹਿਣਾ ਸਦਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ,  
 ਇਸ ਬਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਝੁੰਮਦਿਆਂ ਮਸਤੀ ਰਵਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੈ ।

ਬੀਤੀ ਹੈ ਰਾਤ ਸਾਰੀ ਤਾਰ ਲਟਕ ਗਏ ਹਨ  
 ਹੋਈ ਹੈ ਭੋਰ ਗਾਫਲ ! ਨੈਣਾਂ ਮਿਟੇ ਪਏ ਹਨ ।  
 ਉਠ ਜਾਗ ਕਰ ਤਿਆਰੀ ਘੜਿਆਲ ਵੱਜ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ।  
 ਤੇਰੇ ਪਲੰਘ ਦੁਲੀਚੇ ਹਾਲੀ ਵੀ ਸਜ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ।  
 ਪੈਂਡਾ ਹੈ ਦੂਰ ਗਾਫਲ ਤੋਸ਼ਾ ਬਨਾ ਹੈ ਵੇਲਾ  
 ਸੁਤਿਆਂ ਜਿ ਬੀਤੇ ਇਹ ਵੀ ਹੋਸੀ ਸਫਰ ਦੁਹੇਲਾ ।  
 ਉਠ ਜਾਗ ਜਾਗ ਬਹਿ ਜਾ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਵਸਨ ਫੁਹਾਰੇ,  
 ਕਰ ਕੌਲ ਦਿਲ ਦਾ ਸਿਧਾ ਭਰ ਭਰ ਕੇ ਪੀ ਪਿਆਰੇ ।  
 ਪੀ ਪੀ ਕੇ ਹੋ ਜਾ ਖੀਵਾ, ਖੀਵਾ ਹੋ ਆਪ ਜਾਣੀ ।  
 ਆਪੇ ਦੀ ਪੀਂਘ ਚੜ੍ਹਕੇ ਪਿਆਰੇ ਦੇ ਰੰਗ ਮਾਣੀ ।

### YOU WAKE-UP, GET-UP AND CONTEMPLATE

The gardner grows the flowers and brings them up  
 The gardner picks them up from the branch and separates  
 He puts them in the flower vase, decorates them  
 He it is who empties them out of that vase  
 O you the forgetful why don't you contemplate  
 You are not to exist evermore  
 While remaining in this garden  
 It is not correct to live in oblivion  
 The night has gone away  
 The stars have faded  
 The dawn is spreading out  
 Your eyes are still closed  
 You get up and be in readiness  
 The bells are tolling  
 Your comfortable beds and carpets  
 Are still in queer display  
 You have to cover a long distance  
 You should shun neglect  
 The time is there to prepare for the journey  
 If the time is spent out in sleep  
 The travel will be difficult  
 You wake up and sit in meditation  
 The fountains of nectar may start pouring

Fill the goblet of your heart and drink lavishly

Drink and be inebriated

In a state of mysticism realize who you are

Swinging in the cradle of self-realisation

Be saturated with the love for your beloved !

The aim is to inculcate the consciousness that life is transitory and it relentlessly is moving towards its end. There is lot of attraction in the environment and the mind is likely to remain entangled. Every breath has the tolling of farewell bells in it. You must invoke the divine power to be all the while with you. A unique love may saturate your existence.

Towards the end of this volume, the poet addresses the Tenth Master and inquires :—

ਮੁੜਕੇ ਕਦ ਹੁਣ ਆਓਗੇ ?  
 ਦਸ ਮੇਰੇ ਕਲਗੀਆਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਦਾਤਾ !  
 ਮੁੜ ਕੇ ਕਦ ਹੁਣ ਆਓਗੇ ?  
 ਸੰਗਤਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਡੀਕਾਂ ਖਲੀਆਂ  
 ਕਦ ਆਓ ਕਦ ਆਓ ਗੇ ?  
 ਦੱਖਣ ਗਏ, ਗਏ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਅਰਸ਼ੀਂ  
 ਹੇਠਾਂ ਫੇਰ ਨਾ ਪਰਤੇ ਹੋ,  
 ਖੜੇ ਖਾਲਸੇ ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਬਨ੍ਹ ਬਨ੍ਹ,  
 “ਹੁਣ ਆਓ, ਹੁਣ ਆਓਗੇ ?  
 ਦਿਸਣ ਵਾਲਾ ਰੂਪ ਆਪਣਾ  
 ਵੇਖਿਆਂ ਠੰਡ ਜੁ ਪਾਂਦਾ ਸੀ ।  
 ਮੋਹ ਲੈਂਦਾ ਸੀ, ਝਲਕ ਆਪਣੀ  
 ਮੁੜ ਕਦ ਆਣ ਦਿਖਾਓ ਗੇ ?  
 “ਚਰਨ ਛੋਹ” ਉਹ ਪਯਾਰੀ ਪਯਾਰੀ  
 ਝਰਨ ਝਰਨ ਜੋ ਲਾਂਦੀ ਸੀ  
 ਭਰ ਦੇਂਦੀ ਸੀ ਜਿੰਦ ਅਨੋਖੀ  
 ਕਦ ਫਿਰ ਆਨ ਦਿਵਾਓਗੇ ?  
 ਮਿਠੀ “ਸੱਦ ਮਾਹੀ ਦੀ” ਸੁਣਿਆਂ  
 ਸਦੀਆਂ ਮੁਕਦੀਆਂ ਜਾਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ

“ਮੇਰੇ ਰੂਪ ਖਾਲਸਾ” ਮੁੜ ਕੇ  
 ਫਿਰ ਕਦ ਆਣ ਸੁਣਾਓਗੇ ?  
 ਨੀਲੇ ਦੇ ਅਸਵਾਰ ਸੁਹਣਿਆਂ  
 ਫੌਜਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੇ ਮਾਲਕ ਜੀ  
 ਵਜਦੇ ਉਸ ਰਣਜੀਤ ਨਗਾਰੇ  
 ਕਦ ਆਓ ਕਦ ਆਓਗੇ ।  
 ਦੇਹੀ ਵਾਲੇ ਨੈਣ ਅਸਾਡੇ  
 ਸੁੰਦਰ ਦੇਹੀ ਤੁਹਾਡੀ ਦੇ  
 ਮੁੜ ਦਰਸਨ ਨੂੰ ਤਰਸ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ  
 ਦਸੋ ਨਾ ਕਦ ਆਓ ਗੇ ?  
 ਚੰਦ ਵਾਂਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਤਾਰਿਆਂ ਬੈਠੇ  
 ਕੀਰਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਸਾਈਂ ਦੀ  
 ਬੈਕੁੰਠਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵੱਧ ਰਸਾਂ ਦੇ  
 ਕਦ ਦੀਵਾਨ ਆ ਲਾਓ ਗੇ ?  
 ਮੰਗ ਅਸਾਡੀ ਬਾਲਾਂ ਵਾਲੀ  
 ਪਰ ਬਾਲਾਂ ਦੇ ਬਾਪੂ ਜੀ !  
 ਲਾਡਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਕੀਤੀਆਂ ਬਚਿਆਂ  
 ਅਰਜ਼ਾਂ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਪੁਜਾਓ ਗੇ ?  
 ਸਦਕੇ ਬਿਰਦ ਆਪਣੇ ਦਾਤਾ  
 ਆਓਗੇ ਪਰ ਆਓ ਗੇ,  
 ਸਾਡਾ ਇਹੀ ਅਡੋਲ ਭਰੋਸਾ  
 ਆਓ ਗੇ ਪਰ ਆਓ ਗੇ ।

Tell me my benefactor, O Lord wearing the plume  
 When will you now come back ?  
 The congregations are standing to attention  
 When will you come, when will you come back ?  
 You went to the South and took flight to the heavens  
 You have not come down to earth again  
 The Khalsa is looking without winking  
 You will come now, you will come !  
 Your visible embellishment  
 Which bestowed comforting delight,

Which ignited love, your enchanting glimpse  
     When will you display that again ?  
 The affectionate divine touch of your feet  
     Which used to cause reciprocal vibrations  
 And used to inject queer freshness of life  
     When will that confer its experience again ?  
 Without listening to the sweet voice of the beloved  
     Centuries are withering away  
 "Khalsa is my manifestation"  
     When will you proclaim that again ?  
 O, you the charming rider of the sky-coloured steed  
     Master of the armies  
 With the beatings of that drum of victory  
     When will you repair back  
 These eyes living in physical form  
     Are anxious to behold your charming personality  
 Kindly tell us when will you come again ?  
     Shining like the Moon, amidst the stars  
 Inspiring all praise for the Supreme Lord  
     Those which may surpass pleasures in paradise  
 When will you assemble divine congregations ?  
 Our supplication is like that of children  
     But you the father of these children  
 Surely will grant their affectionate entreaties  
     In order to fulfill your commitment  
 O, our benefactor you will come, surely come  
     Ours is the firm faith  
 You will come, surely come to us !

This poem has incarnate jubilant faith in it. Faith has, perhaps, many facets. The faith in Bhai Vir Singh could never suffer any shake or shiver. It is the quality of that faith in him which outshines others.

He had read extensively the Gurbani produced by the Tenth Master's venerable genius. Guru Gobind Singh was one of the most outstanding sources of unique literature. The entire

history of the human race does not provide any other example of a perfect combination of a prophet, a poet, an inspiring general and a rare magnetic source always disseminating his presence to those who love him.

In recent history, during the British times, the Sikhs participating in various movements displayed exceptional fortitude while suffering great torture. In their movement for the liberation of the Sikh shrines they non-violently faced severe blows at the hands of their tormentors. Their undying faith that Guru Gobind Singh was all the while present with them kept them in high spirits.

Some of those who really love him, truthfully believe that he is present with them as a perpetual guide. There are those who expect that he may physically come back to lead his people in times of adversity.

Bhai Vir Singh has portrayed an infusion of his Khalsa and Guru Gobind Singh.

This volume contains the poet's intimate homage to Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Guru Gobind Singh Ji. In many a composition he has tried to capture the feelings of others by exercising exceptional imagination. Written from time to time, a common link vibrates in the poems. The readers' mind continues to imbibe blissful reverence. This volume is a significant contribution.

\* \* \* \*

## Kant Maheli

There was a time when poets used to describe their individual repercussions during the twelve months of the years. Almost in each case the anxious longing of a maiden for her lover spreading over the year was expressed in twelve parts.

In this volume Bhai Vir Singh has recorded the pining in a damsel who is grieving for her lover. She is bereft of him.

Beginning with the first month, according to the Indian calendar he has ascribed some feelings to each month. Some of them are noticed here.

### ਚੇਤ

ਚੜ੍ਹ ਪਿਆ ਚੇਤਰ ਸੁਹਾਵਾ  
ਮਿਠੀਆਂ ਵਗਣ ਹਵਾਈਂ  
ਬਾਗੀਂ ਖਿੜੀਆਂ ਬਹਾਰਾਂ  
ਖੁਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਡੁਲ੍ਹ ਡੁਲ੍ਹ ਪਈਆਂ ।  
ਕੰਤੇ ਆਣ ਸੁਣਾਈ  
ਕੋਈ ਕੂਚ ਤਿਆਰੀ  
ਉੱਡ ਗਏ ਹਥਾਂ ਦੇ ਤੋਤੇ  
ਦਿਲ ਦੀਆਂ ਦਿਲ ਵਿਚ ਰਹੀਆਂ  
ਹਾਏ ਚੇਤਰ ਮਹੀਨੇ  
ਕੰਤੇ ਕੀਤੀ ਤਿਆਰੀ  
ਲੀਤੇ ਤਰਲੇ ਬਥੇਰੇ  
ਪੇਸ਼ ਕੋਈ ਨਾ ਗਈਆਂ ।  
ਚੜ੍ਹ ਪਿਆ ਘੋੜੇ ਤੇ ਮਾਹੀ



ਬਣ ਕੇ ਢੋਲ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ  
 ਤੁਰ ਗਿਆ ਦੂਰ ਮੁਹੀਮੀ  
 ਮੈਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਡੋਬਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਈਆਂ ।

### CHAITAR

The beautiful "Chaitar" has arrived  
 Sweet winds are blowing  
 There is smiling spring in the gardens  
 Happiness is sprinkling itself everywhere !  
 My lover has declared  
 He is going away  
 I have been caught in bewilderment  
 My aspirations have suffered a setback,  
 Oh in this every opening month  
 My lover has decided to go away  
 I have spent many entreaties  
 But those have been of no avail  
 My beloved has settled on his horse  
 As a beguiling soldier  
 He has left for far off fighting front  
 I am in deep waters of agony.

The poet himself, of course, is the woman in this case whose consort has left for the war front.

The Indian year starts with the incoming of spring. The change in the season is such that it fills every one with delight and expectation. The breeze seems to be entering the soul. There is perfume in every breath. There is incitement to physical contact. Love becomes the rule with men, women, birds and beasts. It is least expected that your lover whom you need so ardently will think of going away from you. In the prevailing environment the parting becomes more poignant.

When the flowers are smiling and their fragrance is being enjoyed by other couples you can not accept the circumstances which necessitate separation.

The feelings assigned to the second month are just in four lines.

In this month called Baisakh there comes a festival. It is called "Baisakhi" and is celebrated with great pomp and show. The wail is :—

### ਵੈਸਾਖ

ਰੋਂਦਿਆਂ ਆ ਗਈ ਵਿਸਾਖੀ  
ਸਾਨੂੰ ਚਾਉ ਨ ਕੋਈ  
ਘਰ ਘਰ ਸੀਰੇ ਤੇ ਮੰਡੇ  
ਚੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਅੱਗ ਨਾ ਪਈਆ ।

### BAISAKH

Baisakhi has arrived while in tears  
There is no expectation in me  
In every home sweet dishes and bread  
I have lighted no cooking fire !

In the third month her wishes were :—

### ਜੇਠ

ਚੜ੍ਹ ਪਿਆ ਜੇਠ, ਵੇ ਕੰਤਾ !  
ਤਪੀਆਂ ਭੋਆਂ ਤੇ ਵਾਵਾਂ  
ਅੰਦਰ ਧੁਖਦਾ ਵਿਛੋੜੇ  
ਛੇਜੇ ਲੁਛ ਲੁਛ ਰਹੀਆਂ ।  
ਲੋਆਂ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਚਾ ਘਲੀਂ  
ਜੇਠਾ ! ਅਰਜ਼ਾਂ ਹਾਂ ਕਰਦੀ  
ਤੱਤੀ ਵਾਉ ਦਾ ਝੋਲਾ  
ਲੱਗੇ ਸਾਈਂ ਨ ਦੇਹੀਆਂ ।

### JETH

O, my consort ! the month of "Jeth" is on  
The soil is hot and in shade it is warm  
The biting separation is burning in me  
I am in loathsome condition on this deserted bed,

Send the scorching winds to me  
 O, the month of "Jeth" I beseech you  
 Even slightly hot discomfoting air  
 Should not trouble the body of my beloved !

There is, undoubtedly, deep disturbing pain in her mind. It is tormenting her body as well as mind. The wrinkles of grief are casting their net. The poet's grasp of the sensations in her is praiseworthy.

The fourth month is "Harr". It is still more scorching. How is her mind conditioned in that month ? Let us examine.

The feelings in the fourth month run on further in the same strain.

ਹਾੜ੍ਹ

ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਹਾੜ੍ਹੋਂ ਮਹੀਨਾ  
 ਬਾਰਾਂ ਭਠ ਤਪੇਂਦੇ,  
 ਲੋਂਦੇ ਕਾਵਾਂ ਤੇ ਚਿੜੀਆਂ  
 ਮੈਂ ਵਧ ਸਹਿਕਦੀ ਪਈਆਂ ।  
 ਹਿਕ ਦੁਖ ਆਪਣਾ ਵਿਛੋੜਾ  
 ਦੂਜੇ ਮਾਹੀ ਦੀ ਚਿੰਤਾ,  
 ਘੁੱਟ ਸਬਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਪੀ ਪੀ  
 ਵਿੱਚ ਹਾਵਯਾਂ ਦੇ ਪਈਆਂ ।

The lines quoted above mean :—

### HARR

The month of "Harr" has started  
 Everywhere there is intense heat  
 The sparrows and crows are dying of thirst  
 My condition is still more worse  
 There is distress because I am disunited  
 Then there is constant worry regarding his welfare  
 Living on draughts of patience  
 I am contending with the suffocating depths of sorrow.

The composition further on depicts various attitudes in grief.

This poem is an episode of lamentation.

Let us enter "Assu" the month which produces cold nights.  
The climatic change does not change her condition.

The narration is :—

ਅਸ਼ੂ

ਚੜ੍ਹਿਆ ਅਸ਼ੂ ਮਹੀਨਾ  
ਰਾਤਾਂ ਠਰਦੀਆਂ ਜਾਵਣ  
ਧੁੱਪਾਂ ਡਾਢੀਆਂ ਦਿਨ ਨੂੰ  
ਤੇਰੇ ਫਿਕਰੀਂ ਮੈਂ ਪਈਆਂ ।  
ਜੇੜੇ ਦੇਸੀਂ ਮੈਂ ਮਾਹੀ  
ਸ਼ਾਲਾ ਧੁਪਾਂ ਨ ਪਾਵੀਂ ।  
ਮਾਹੀਆ ! ਮੋੜ ਲੈ ਵਾਗਾਂ  
ਸਾਰੀ ਸਦਕੇ ਹੋ ਰਹੀਆਂ ।  
ਆਜਾ ਆਜਾ ਵੇ ਕੰਤਾ  
ਆ ਕੇ ਦੇਖ ਪਿਆਰੀ  
ਤੇਰੇ ਗ਼ਮ ਨੇ ਨਚੋੜੀ  
ਰਤੀ ਰੱਤ ਨ ਰਹੀਆ ।

ASSU

The month of "Assu" is taking its turn

The nights pass along shivering

The sunshine is biting during the day

I am worried about you !

"The regions in which the beloved is

May the sunshine be not so hot there"

O my beloved turn back your steed

I am entirely dedicated to you

Please, come along my dearest

Come and look at the one who loves you

Wrenched by grief inflicted on me

Not a drop of blood is left in the body.

The picture presented above displays that her condition

continued to deteriorate. Caught in true love, having been disunited the beguiled lady was moving from one phase of distress to another.

The poet, perhaps himself was entangled in sympathetic agony. He decided to give a pleasant turn to the events. That could be possible only if the narration could bring back her lover. The last month of the year while ending its days reintroduced unification. The return of the lover is described as under :—

ਫੱਗਣ ਦਾ ਅੰਤ

ਬੈਠਾ ਕੌਣ ਸਿਰ੍ਹਾਣੇ  
ਹੱਥ ਮਥੇ ਤੇ ਧਰਿਆ  
ਜਿੰਦ ਰੁਮਕੇ ਏ ਲਾਂਦਾ  
ਜੀਉ ਜੀਉ ਰੱਬਾ ਮੈਂ ਪਈਆਂ ।  
ਝੁਕ ਝੁਕ ਕੌਣ ਏ ਵੇਂਹਦਾ ?  
ਏਹ ਤਾਂ ਨੈਣ ਪਿਆਰੇ  
ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਮਾਂਹੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਝਾਤਾਂ  
ਝਾਤਾਂ ਮਾਂਹੀ ਦੀਆਂ ਪਈਆਂ !  
ਆਹੋ ਆਹੋ ਨੀਂ ਸਹੀਉ !  
ਆ ਗਿਆ ਮਾਂਹੀ ਨੀਂ ਮੇਰਾ  
ਤੇਰੇ ਬਾਝੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਮਾਂਹੀ  
ਮੈਂ ਤਾਂ ਮੈਂ ਹੀ ਨ ਰਹੀਆਂ ।

Who is sitting by my pillow ?  
He has placed his hand on my forehead  
He is breathing new life into me  
O God I am being enlivened !  
Who is bending again and again looking at me ?  
These are those loving eyes  
These are glimpses of my lover  
My lover is playing hide and seek  
Yes oh yes my dear companions  
My lover has returned  
O, without you my dearest  
I did not remain what I was !

It is a dictum that all is well that ends well. The poet brought back reunion. A fair attainment by fair and faithful love !

## O, My Saviour

This volume with poems addressed to the gracious Lord of the universe is the product of a process of meditation which had reached sublime perfection. In constant prayer the mind's eye can digest elevating visions. Where life seeks companionship with Providence its entire texture changes. Links with unknown regions begin to divulge information hitherto unavailable. The human race is enriched by the recorded experience of those who receive spiritual bliss.

Bhai Vir Singh was blessed with an enriched spiritual existence. His soul had explored the sources of heavenly joy. He was steadfast but was never a victim of ego. In his own right he remains an unassailed victor.

The very first poem in this volume requires that it should be made available in its perfection.

This is a superb poem and it says :—

ਪ੍ਰਾਰਥ

ਮੇਰੇ ਗੀਤ !  
ਮੇਰੇ ਗੀਤ, ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਈਆਂ !  
ਤੁਸਾਂ ਲਈ ਗਾਏ ਗਏ ਗੀਤ,  
ਕਿਥੇ ਚਲੇ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਹਨ ?  
ਚੁਪ ਚੁਪਾਤੇ ਟੁਰ ਗਏ ਹਾਇ ਕਿਉਂ ?  
ਮੇਰੀ ਦਿਲ ਵੀਣਾ ਦਾ ਠਾਠ ਚੁਪ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ, ਕਿਉਂ ?  
ਮਿਠੀ ਮਿਠੀ ਥ੍ਰਾਟ, ਪਯਾਰੀ ਪਯਾਰੀ ਕੰਬਣੀ  
ਤਾਰਾਂ ਤਰਬਾਂ ਦੀ, ਕਿਉਂ ਖਲੋ ਗਈ ਏ ?  
ਹੁਣ ਮੈਂ, ਸਾਈਆਂ ਮੇਰੇ ! ਕੀ ਭੇਟਾ ਕਰਾਂ ਆਪ ਨੂੰ

ਹੁਣ ਕਿਸ ਨੂੰ ਘੱਲਾਂ ਜੋ ਤੁਸਾਂ ਦੇ ਸੰਗੀਤਕ ਸ੍ਵਣ-ਮੰਡਲ  
ਵਿੱਚ ਜਾ ਕੇ ਆਪਣੀ ਬਾਲ ਚੋਜੀ ਨਿਰਤਕਾਰੀ ਕਰੇ ?

...

...

...

ਮੇਰੇ ਗੀਤ

ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਈਆਂ ਜੀ ਦੇ “ਗੀਤ-ਸੋਹਿਲੇ”

ਹਾਂ

ਪਰਤ ਆਓ, ਪਰਤ ਆਓ ਸੋਹਣਿਓ !

ਕਸ ਦਿਉ ਆਕੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਦਿਲ ਵੀਣਾ ਦੀਆਂ ਤਾਰਾਂ ਤਰਬਾਂ ।

ਕਰੋ ਫਿਰ ਨਿਰਤਕਾਰੀ ਕਸੀਆਂ ਉਤੇ

ਛੇੜ ਦਿਓ ਸੁਰਾਂ ਦਿਲ-ਖਿੱਚ

ਤੇ ਨਗਮੇ ਦਿਲ ਚੀਰ,

ਵਿਨ੍ਹ ਦਿਓ ਫੇਰ ਬ੍ਰਾਟਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਮੇਰਾ ਮਨ

ਉਠਣ ਤਰੰਗਾਂ ਸਾਗਰੋਂ ਆਈ ਪੈਣ ਵਾਂਙੂੰ

ਛਿੜੇ ਮੇਰਾ ਚੁਪ ਗਲਾ, ਬੋਲਦੀ ਬੁਲਬੁਲ ਵਾਂਙੂੰ

ਹਾਂ ਬਾਲ ਗਲੇ ਦੀਆਂ ਬਿਬਕਦੀਆਂ ਬਿਬਕਦੀਆਂ

ਤਾਨਾ-ਰੀਰੀਆਂ ਪਹੁੰਚ ਪੈਣ

ਤੁਸਾਂ ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਈਆਂ ਜੀਓ ਦੀ

ਹਜ਼ੂਰੀ ਵਿੱਚ ।

My songs !

My songs, O my saviour !

The songs which I did sing for you, where are they gone ?

So silently they have gone, but why ?

Why has the melody arising out of my musical heart stopped ?

The sweetening vibration, the lovely quiver

Of the inner chords, why has that stopped ?

Now, oh my saviour, what offering should I make to you ?

Now whom may I send into your orchestral space

Where he may present the innocent child like dance ?

My songs

The songs paying homage to my saviour

Yes

Come back, O, come back dear ones !

Set tight the musical chords of this modulated heart

Then start dancing on those regulated chords  
 Start the heart captivating tunes  
 And the strains that may penetrate the mind  
 Pierce my soul with affectionate vibrations  
 Reverberations may arise like those in the sea breeze  
 My silenced throat may start singing like a "Bulbul"  
 Yes the entreating modulations from my boyish throat  
 May, O', my saviour reach your exalted presence !

This rhymed love for the divine we do not easily come accross elsewhere. There is something individual, something exceptional about it. In how many of his lovers does the Invisible inspire such deep affection ? All songs, the poet announces, full of praise for his saviour have merged into the unseen. Where have they gone ? He is in intense search. Then he urges those songs to dawn again upon him. He is anxious that the musical instrument in him should start producing similar vibrations, similar songs. He desires that a freshness be wafted unto him containing inspiring currents of thought. He expects the songs to refresh him like the breeze coming from the sea.

The above quoted poem incited me to search out a specimen in the English language coming upto it. The search has been well rewarded. It is difficult to reason out as to how the two poets produced almost identical melody in thought word and deed. The identity in "deed" needs to be emphasised because the two poets wrote in two different languages and while living in countries far apart.

You will surely appreciate the well established greatness in John Milton when you read his poem.

### AT A SOLEMEN MUSIC

Blest pair of sirens, pledges of Heaven's Joy,  
 Sphere-born harmonious sisters, voice and verse !  
 Wed your divine sounds, and mixet power employ  
 Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce ;



And to our high-raised phantasy present  
 That undisturbed song of pure concert  
 Ay sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne  
 To Him who sits thereon,

With saintly shout and solemn Jubilee ;  
 Where the bright Seraphim in burning row  
 Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow;

And the cherubic host in thousand quires,  
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,  
 With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,  
 Hymns devout and holy psalms  
 Singing everlastingly :

That we on earth, with undiscording voice  
 May rightly answer that melodious noise ;  
 As once we did, till disproportioned sin  
 Jarr'd against nature's chime, and with harsh din  
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made  
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd  
 In perfect diaphanous, whilst they stood  
 In first obedience, and their state of good.

O, may we soon again renew that song,  
 And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long  
 To His celestial consort us unite  
 To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light.

Milton in his own way is unique. Which is that pair of sirens which is blessed to produce "pledges of Heavens Joy" ? According to the intuitive declaration by John Milton "voice and verse" are "sphere-born harmonious sisters". Their divine sounds breathe fresh life into dead things. Then the moment arrives when "our high-raised phantasy" presents the undisturbed song. That song is sung by the soul "before the sapphire coloured throne" on which God sits. There is saintly shout and solemn Jubilee. The "loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow" in praise of the Lord. Then the expression reaches a new height. His mind soaring in high divine regions, Milton says :—

“And the cherubic host in thousand quires  
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires”

That performance is to procure :—

“Hymns devout and holy psalms  
Singing everlastingly !”

Bhai Vir Singh's poem which has attracted a quotation from John Milton, depicts the yearning in Bhai Sahib to be “singing everlastingly in praise of his Saviour.” The song in Bhai Vir Singh proceeded out of his deep affection for the “Infinite”.

Let us have another song from this volume :—

ਸਦਕੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਜਾਦੂਗਰੀ ਦੇ  
ਮਰੇ ਅੰਦਰ, ਧੁਰ ਅੰਦਰ, ਧੁਰ ਅੰਦਰ ਦੇ  
ਕਿਸੇ ਉਹਲੇ ਲੁਕੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ !  
ਹਾਂ,  
ਟੁੰਬਨੇ ਓ ਆਪਣੀਆਂ ਸੰਗੀਤਕ ਟੁੰਬਾਂ ਨਾਲ,  
ਜਗਾ ਦੇਨੇ ਓ ਤਰਬਾਂ ਤਾਰਾਂ  
ਅੰਦਰਲੇ ਦੀਆਂ,  
ਗਾਉਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਉਹ ਗੀਤ  
—ਤੁਸਾਂ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਬਿਰਹੇ, ਤੁਸਾਂ ਜੀ ਦੇ ਮਿਲਨ ਦੇ ਤਰਾਨੇ—  
ਜੋ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਨ ਜਾਦੂਗਰੀ ਮੇਰੇ ਹੀ ਉਤੇ ।  
ਮੇਰੀ ਮੈਂ ਬਿਟ ਬਿਟ ਤੱਕਦੀ  
ਰਹਿ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਏ ਕੰਬਦੀ ਤੇ ਥਰਰਾਂਦੀ ।

ਨੀਂਦ, ਹਾਂ ਖਸ ਲਿਜਾਂਦੇ ਹੋ ਮੇਰੀ ਨੀਂਦ  
ਜਾਗ, ਹਾਂ ਲਰਜਦੀ ਹੈ ਮੇਰੀ ਜਾਗ  
ਜਿਵੇਂ ਲਰਜਦੀ ਏ ਤਿਲੇ ਦੀ ਤਾਰ  
ਸੁੰਦਰੀ ਦੇ ਪੱਲੇ ਨਾਲ ਪਲਮਦੀ ।

ਆਹ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ !  
ਦਿਸਣ ਦੇ ਉਹਲੇ ਲੁਕੇ ਪ੍ਰੀਤਮ !  
ਕੋਲ ਕੋਲ ਪਰ ਦੂਰ ਦੂਰ

ਦੂਰ ਦੂਰ ਪਰ ਕੋਲ ਕੋਲ  
ਸਦਕੇ ਤੇਰੀ ਜਾਦੂਗਰੀ ਦੇ !  
ਰਸਨਾ ! ਚੁੱਪ !  
ਹਾਂ ਕੰਬਦੀ ਬਰਕਦੀ ਰਸਨਾ ਚੁੱਪ ।  
ਸਖੀਏ !  
ਏਥੇ ਬੋਲਣ ਦੀ ਨਹੀਂ ਜਾਅ ।

There is a strange element which calls for comment. Who was the originator of blank verse in Punjabi ? Was it Bhai Vir Singh or Prof. Puran Singh ? There may not be the slashing current of thought but surely the usual rhyming by Bhai Vir Singh is conspicuous by its absence. This composition is in blank verse. The texture is the same as in the case of the celebrated American poet Walt Whitman. In his anthology, which is world famous, Whitman comes out with a poetical pattern which in its exuberant style remains unsurpassed. Puran Singh's poems although there is abundance, intensity and originality of thought in them, at once remind us of Walt Whitman. There is an innocent psychological link between the two. In the composition with which we are dealing, Bhai Vir Singh seems to have steered clear of the shackles of rhymed poetry.

Walt Whitman with his "Leaves of Grass" opened a new chapter in the poetical world by cutting new furrows. In one of his poems Whitman states :—

[1] I celebrate myself  
And what I assume you shall assume,  
For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you  
I loafe and invite my soul,  
I lean and loafe at my ease.....  
.....observing a spear of summer grass !

In another poem Walt Whitman's speed in capturing intimate thought in words is remarkable. Just see :—

[18] This is the trill of a thousand clear cornets  
And scream of the octave flute and strike of triangles

I play not a march for victors only...I play great marches for  
conquered and slain persons.

Have you heard that it was good to gain the day ?

I also say it is good to fall...battles are lost in the same  
spirit in which they are won.

I sound triumphal drums for the dead...I fling through  
my embouchures the loudest and gayest music to them,  
Vivas to those who have failed, and to those whose war-vessels  
sank in the sea, and those themselves who sank in the  
sea

And to all generals who lost engagements, and all overcome  
heroes,

And the numberless unknown heroes equal to the greatest  
heroes known.

You will agree that even though classified as poetry blank  
verse has predominantly the verse in it minus the song. Bhai Vir  
Singh's composition which is under discussion, even being without  
rhyme, contains a musical undercurrent in it. Rendered in English  
the poems is :—

### IN REVERENTIAL REGARD FOR YOUR ENCHANTING QUALITY

In me, deep inside me

Hidden behind some screen, O my beloved

Yes

You are rousing in me with musical incitement

The rhythmical melodies

Residing inside

And they start singing the songs—

—Lamenting separation and supplicating for reunion—

Which work their magic on me !

My ego in consternation

Goes down shivering in astonishment !

.....

Sleep, you deprive me of my sleep

Awakening, yes my awakening vibrates

Just as the golden thread  
Warbles while swinging detached from a fair lady's scarf!

.....  
O my beloved hidden behind visibility itself  
Near indeed yet very far  
Very far yet near indeed  
I bow to your enchanting quality !

.....  
My tongue is tied  
Yes my voice full of vibration is silenced  
These moments do not permit divulgence !

When love reaches the height of attainment the song is silenced. No strain, no streak can run across a union.

Whosoever may be the poet the poems produced by him have their distinct personality. Before publishing them in the form of a book poems bearing similarity to each other may be collected together. There are, however, volumes of poetry, wherein poems by the same poet dealing with different topics are published in one place. In Bhai Vir Singh the focus remains on the Eternal. There is always something ethereal about his writings. There was some ordainment which moved inside him. There was a spiritual intendment facilitating the movement of his pen. There was the might in him clothed in humility. The music in him had its source in regions clean and pure. It is not the admiration of the reader which he attracts. It is the mind seeking the truth which can find solace while trying to imbibe his message.

Love has its own phases. In ripe imagination there many times is the conversation with the beloved. The manipulations keep on vibrating in the mind. Music turns the feelings into poems. The invisible decides about the actual shape. The muse often times evolves a story disclosing the manner in which the lover and beloved may have acted. Such is the instance which one of these poems provided and we are to seek introduction with some of its features. It is a long poem, the significant portions whereof are these :—

ਜਾਂਦਾ ਆਪ ਹਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੁਆਰ

ਮੈਂ ਬਕਰੀਆਂ ਚਾਰਦੀ  
ਦੁਪਹਿਰਾਂ ਦੇ ਸੂਰਜ ਤੋਂ ਥੱਕੀ,  
ਚਿਨਾਰ ਦੀ ਛਾਵੇਂ ਪੱਥਰ ਸ਼ਿਲਾ ਤੇ ਬੈਠੀ ਨੂੰ  
ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਜਨ ! ਤੇਰੇ ਸਿਪਾਹੀ ਨੇ  
ਤੇਰਾ ਹੁਕਮ ਸੁਣਾਇਆ :—  
ਰਾਤ, ਹਾਂ ਅੱਧੀ ਰਾਤ  
ਆ ਮਹਿਲੀਂ, ਖੜਕਾ ਦਰਵਾਜ਼ਾ  
ਪਾਤਸ਼ਾਹੀ ਮਹਲ ਦਾ—  
ਪਿਛਵਾੜੇ ਵਾਲੇ ਪਾਸੇ ਦਾ ਦਰਵਾਜ਼ਾ ।  
ਖੋਲੇਗਾ ਆਪ ਆ ਰਾਜਾ  
ਆਪਣੇ ਕਿਵਾੜ ।  
ਹਾਂ ਰੁਲਦੀਏ, ਖੁਲਦੀਏ ।  
ਭਾ ਗਿਆ ਏ ਰਾਜਾ ਨੂੰ,  
ਤੇਰਾ ਲੀਰਾਂ ਲਪੇਟਿਆ ਰੂਪ ।

...  
ਕੰਬਦੀ ਤੇ ਓਦਰਦੀ  
ਕਦੇ ਅਮੰਨਾ ਕਰਦੀ  
ਕਦੇ ਹਾਸੀ ਸਮਝਦੀ,  
ਮੈਂ ਤੁਰ ਹੀ ਪਈ ਅੱਧੀ ਰਾਤ ।  
ਤੁਰਦੀ ਤੇ ਠਹਿਰਦੀ,  
ਕਦੇ ਠੁਮਕਦੀ ਕਦੇ ਥਿਰਕਦੀ,  
ਆ ਪਹੁੰਚੀ ਹਾਂ ਤੇਰੇ ਦੁਆਰ  
ਰਾਜਾ ਜੀ ! ਖੁਹਲੋ ਕਿਵਾੜ ।

...  
ਕਿਥੇ ਉ ਬੰਦ ਕਿਵਾੜ ?  
ਮੈਂ ਤਾਂ ਮਰ ਗਈ ਸਾਂ ਤੇਰੇ ਦੁਆਰ  
ਤੇਰੇ ਦੇਖ ਕੇ ਬੰਦ ਕਿਵਾੜ,  
ਖਾ ਕੇ ਮੀਂਹਾਂ ਦੀ ਹਾਇ ਬੁਛਾੜ ।

...  
ਇਹ ਤਾਂ ਮੇਰੀ ਹੈ ਆਪਣੀ ਛੰਨ—  
ਕੁਲੀ ਕਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਕਾਨਿਆਂ ਦੀ ਛੰਨ

ਵਿੱਚ ਬੈਠੇ ਨੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਮਹਾਰਾਜ—  
 ਰਾਜਾ ਜੀ ਰਾਜਾ ਮਹਾਰਾਜ ।  
 ਕਿਵੇਂ ਗਏ ਹੋ ਆ ਮੇਰੀ ਕਖਾਂ ਦੀ ਛੰਨ ?  
 ਕਿਵੇਂ ਗਈ ਹਾਂ ਆ ਦੇਖ ਬੰਦ ਕਿਵਾੜ ?

... ..  
 ਲੈ ਕੇ ਝੋਲੀ ਦੇ ਮੈਂ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ  
 ਕੀਤੇ ਰਾਜੇ ਨੇ ਬੁਲ੍ਹ ਉਘਾੜ :—  
 “ਜੇਹੜੇ ਕਰਦੇ ਨੇ ਮੈਨੂੰ ਪਿਆਰ  
 “ਉਹ ਜਾਂਦੇ ਨੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਦੁਆਰ  
 “ਕਿਵੇਂ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਏ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੀਦਾਰ ।  
 “ਪਰ ਕਰਦਾ ਮੈਂ ਜਿਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪਿਆਰ  
 “ਜਾਂਦਾ ਆਪ ਹਾਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦੇ ਦੁਆਰ,—  
 “ਦੁਆਰ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੇਰਾ ਦੁਆਰ”

Let us examine the English version of the aforequoted edifice :—

### PERSONALLY I GO TO THEIR ABODE !

While grazing the goats  
 Tired because of the midday sun  
 I was sitting on a stone under the shade of “Chinar”  
 When O’ my Sovereign, one of your soldiers  
 Announced your order :—  
 “At night, yes at midnight  
 Come to the palace and knock at the door  
 To the imperial palace  
 The rear door  
 The Sovereign will himself  
 Come and open the door !  
 You, oh you who are a destitute  
 The Sovereign has become fond of  
 Your beauty clad in rags !

.....  
 Shivering and pining  
 Sometimes having faith



Sometimes considering it a joke  
 I moved out at midnight  
 Walking on, but sometimes resting  
 Sometimes in confident strides  
 Sometimes hesitating  
 I have reached your entrance  
 Oh, my Sovereign ! Kindly open the door  
 .....  
 Where are you ? The door is closed  
 I have almost finished life in reaching here  
 Only to find the door shut upon me  
 After I have waded through showers of rain  
 .....  
 Oh this is my own home  
 The residence made out of cane and straw  
 Inside it is enshrined my Sovereign  
 The gracious monarch, the Sovereign  
 "How have you come inside my abode  
 Made of cane and straw ?  
 How have I entered having seen the closed door ?  
 .....  
 Taking me in his lap  
 The Sovereign opened his lips :--  
 "Those who love me  
 They come to my abode  
 Seeking that somehow I should  
 Become visible !  
 But those whom I love  
 I go to their abode  
*Their abode is my abode ! "*

This poem holds out great assurance to one and all. The beloved guides you on the path which is beset with many a hinderance. You are blessed with enough of energy which may sustain you. You may at a certain point of accomplishment feel sure that you have attained him. All that may happen but it is left to him alone to satiate the human self with his gracious presence.



The poet has recorded in words a message which may impart self-confidence to tread a path across which many a disengaging attraction is dancing.

The experiences over many years which had enriched the poet's repository replenished his poems.

Let us imbibe real knowledge; real joy by affectionately attending to another of his poems in this volume.

(The central theme is the attainment of the capacity to recognize His presence in all aspects of creation.) He creates and He is present in all that is visible. Out of the invisible, all that is visible, comes into being. The Lord of all remains the spirit that sustains all. The opening part of the poem is noticed :—

ਸਾਈਆਂ ਜੀ ਦੀ ਸਿਆਣ  
 ਏ ਕੌਣ ਹਨ ਜੋ ਆਖਦੇ ਹਨ :  
 “ਤੇਰੇ ਸਾਈਆਂ ਜੀ ਸਿਆਣ ਨਹੀਂ ਹੁੰਦੇ”?  
 ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਈਆਂ !  
 ਸਿਆਣ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਨੈਣਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਤੈਨੂੰ ।  
 ਤੇਰੀ ਡੁਲ੍ਹ ਡੁਲ੍ਹ ਪੈ ਰਹੀ ਸੁੰਦਰਤਾ ਤੋਂ  
 ਜੋ ਨਜ਼ਾਰਿਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਤੇ ਪਈ ਪੈਂਦੀ ਏ !  
 ਸਿਆਣ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਕੰਨਾਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਤੈਨੂੰ !  
 ਤੇਰੀ ਸੰਗੀਤਕ ਸ਼ਬਦ ਗੂੰਜ ਤੋਂ  
 ਜੋ ਹੋ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ਸਾਰੇ ।  
 ਹਾਂ ਉਛਲ ਕੁੱਦ ਨਚਦੀਆਂ  
 ਸੁਗੰਧੀਆਂ ਸਿਆਣ ਦੇ ਦੋਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ  
 ਮਗਜ਼ਾਂ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ ਤੇਰੀ, ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਈਆਂ  
 ਫੇਰ ਤੈਹਾਂ ਤੋਂ ਵਖਰੇ  
 ਸਿਆਣ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੈਨੂੰ  
 ਤੇਰੀ ਝਰਨ ਝਰਨ ਲਾਉਣ ਵਾਲੀ ਛੋਹ ਤੋਂ ।  
 ਤੇਰੀਆਂ ਝਰਨ ਝਰਨ ਪੈ ਰਹੀਆਂ

ਅਮ੍ਰਿਤ ਬੂੰਦਾਂ  
 ਜੋ ਪਪੀਹੇ ਵਤ  
 ਕੂਕਦਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਮੂੰਹ ਆ ਪੈਂਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ  
 ਕਿਸੇ ਸੁਆਂਤੀ ਨਛਤਰੇ,  
 ਦਸਦੀਆਂ ਹਨ ਤੇਰੀ ਹੋਂਦ ਦਾ ਸੁਆਦ  
 ਰਵਾਨੀ ਰਸਨਾਂ ਵਾਲਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਪੰਜਾਂ ਦੇ ਰਸੀਆਂ ਤੋਂ ਰਸ ਉੱਚਿਆਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਹਾਂ ! ਲਖਾ ਦੇਂਦੇ ਹੋ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਆਪ !  
 —ਦਾਈ ਫੁੱਲਾਂ ਸਿਹਰੇ ਕਰਦੇ—ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ  
 ਆਪਣੇ ਮਨ ਮੰਡਲ ਪਿਛਵਾਰ ਖਲੋਤੇ—  
 ਕਦੇ ਅਗੇ ਵਧਦੇ, ਪਿਛੇ ਹਟਦੇ  
 ਰਲਦੇ, ਵੱਖ ਹੁੰਦੇ, ਘੁਟ ਘੁਟ ਮਿਲਦੇ,  
 ਮਿਲ ਮਿਲ ਜਾਂਦੇ  
 ਨਦੀ-ਸਾਗਰ ਦੇ ਸੰਗਮ ਵਾਂਗੂੰ ।

### PERCEPTION OF THE SAVIOUR

Who are they, who say :  
 "It is difficult to perceive your Saviour ?"  
 Oh my Saviour  
 Those who have "eyes" can recognize you  
 Because of the resplendence you are showering  
 And which out of panoramic beauty is entering the sight !

.....

Those who have open ears perceive you  
 Because of the melodious vibration  
 Of your sublimating voice  
 Prevailing everywhere !

.....

Yes, the ever dancing waves of fragrance  
 Impart the perception of your presence  
 To all those who have enough of brains !

He who existed when nothing existed, exists everywhere. He has not to spend any energy to be present everywhere and with all.

There are mighty snow-capped mountains. There are ever-flowing rivers. There are those which live inside the earth. There are the flying birds with various shapes and multicoloured feathers.

The birds and beasts talk in different voices. There is food growing out of earth. There are flowers dispersing precise fragrance which is their distinct attribute. There are systems of procreation which go on adding numbers.

In all this vanishing show a performance by some common element goes on. Which is that invisible unlimited power ? Those who have quality to perceive that power can comprehend it everywhere. Surely there is the power which at its source is supreme. It is the one power out of which all resurgence arises.

Prophets and poets in all ages have been inspired to pay their homage to that power. It is the perception of that power everywhere which creates amity in all mankind.

Sometimes when your desires are even partially silenced you listen to a song which does not wear the distinct shackles of any language. That "silent song" can invigorate you as nothing else can. It is your sub-conscious with which you listen to that song. If somehow that song gets into your soul you will enjoy the vibrating bliss inside you. Your manner and method of life will change. You will for once be a new person. If you will persist in remembering that he is always present with you then the whole creation will begin to behave differently. In his own benevolence he may confer on you all that you want and sustain you in all situations. He alone would grant to you that which everyone else may deny to you.

He was indeed very kind to Bhai Vir Singh in inspiring sublimated affection. We can be well acquainted with the poet's own estimation of his love if we can have patience with the following poem :—

## ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਦਾ ਉਘਾੜ

ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਂਈਆਂ !  
 ਤੇਰੇ ਗੀਤ ਗਾਵੇਂ  
 ਮੈਂ ਜਾਤਾ ਸੰਗੀਤਕ ਹਾਂ ।  
 ਤੇਰੇ ਛੰਤ ਪੜ੍ਹੇ  
 ਮੈਂ ਜਾਤਾ ਕਵੀ ਹਾਂ ।  
 ਲਾਡਾਂ ਪਯਾਰਾਂ ਨਾਲ ਵਾਜਾਂ ਮਾਰੀਆਂ  
 ਮੈਂ ਜਾਤਾ ਸਾਊ ਹਾਂ ।  
 ਬਿਰਹੇ ਤੇ ਹਾਵੇ ਉਚਾਰੇ,  
 ਮੈਂ ਜਾਤਾ ਆਸ਼ਕ ਹਾਂ ।  
 ਕਦੇ ਕਦੇ ਕੋਈ ਟੁਕਰ ਪੈ ਗਿਆ  
 ਮੈਂ ਜਾਤਾ ਖਬਰੇ ਮਾਸ਼ੂਕ ਹੀ ਨ ਹੋਵਾਂ ।  
 ਅੱਜ ਹਾਂ ਅੱਜ  
 ਸੋਝੀ ਆਈ ਕਿ ਮੈਂ ਅੰਦਰੇ  
 'ਮੰਗਾਂ' ਹੀ 'ਮੰਗਾਂ' ਹਨ ਤੇ  
 ਤੈਂ ਦਰ ਤੇ ਭੀਖਕ ਹਾਂ ।  
 ਹੋਣਾ ਭੀਖਕ ਤੇ ਬਣਨਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮਾਰਤ;  
 ਇਹ ਹੈ ਮੇਰੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਦਾ ਉਘਾੜ ।  
 ਬਹੁੜੀਂ ਸਾਂਈਆਂ ! ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਂਈਆਂ !

## THE ACTUAL STATE OF LOVE

My Saviour  
 I sang in praise of you  
 I concluded that I was a musician !  
 I recited admiring you  
 I thought I was a poet !  
 Out of love and regard called after you  
 I concluded I was humble and perfect  
 Sighed and supplicated in grief  
 I imagined I was a lover  
 Sometimes some loaves were tossed to me

I contemplated I may be the beloved !  
 Today, yes today  
 A consciousness has dawned  
 That I am full of desires and demands  
 I am a beggar on your threshold  
 Being in reality a beggar but pretending to be in love  
 This is the actual state of my love !  
 Come to my rescue my Saviour, oh my Saviour !

In its original text this particular poem also is in blank verse. Alongwith some others it raises the possibility that Prof. Puran Singh devised his free-style prose-poetry on this very pattern. The musical instinct in Bhai Vir Singh did not enslave him within any iron railing. His pen did not move within any enumerated ramifications. We have to conclude that he enjoyed all poetic freedom. There is no doubt that he also wrote in blank verse.

Blank verse is classified as poetry because of some distant musical strain in it. Why did a poet whose pen was in tune with various forms of music write at all in blank verse ? The answer is that he did that inspite of himself. It should be accepted that the ultimate decision as to in what form a poem would find itself lies with the muse. The shape comes into being in accordance with the modulations in those moments. The poetic emotion is so overwhelming that the pen begins to move in conformity with its flash.

The following composition is the advent of "Sailani Chhand" *i.e.* blank verse in Punjabi poetry. Bhai Vir Singh recorded himself sparingly in blank verse while Prof. Puran Singh wrote profusely in blank verse.

Let us enjoy this beautiful poem.

ਮੇਰੇ ਚਪੇ ਲਗ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ

ਮੇਰੇ ਚਪੇ ਲਗ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ।

ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਛਾਤੀ ਤੇ ਮੇਰੀ ਕਿਸਤੀ ਤੁਰੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ,  
ਹੌਲੇ ਹੌਲੇ, ਸਹਿਜੇ ਸਹਿਜੇ, ਰੁਮਕੇ ਰੁਮਕੇ ।

ਦਿਨ ਢਲ ਗਿਆ

ਚਪੇ ਲਗ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ, ਕਿਸਤੀ ਟੁਰੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ ।

ਹਾਂ ਕਿਥੇ ਕੁ ?

ਸ਼ਾਮਾਂ ਪੈ ਗਈਆਂ, ਕਿਸਤੀ ਚਲ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ,

ਮੇਰੇ ਚਪਿਆਂ ਦੇ ਪਾਣੀ ਨਾਲ ਲਗਣ ਦੀ ਆਵਾਜ਼  
ਕਹਿ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ :

ਚਲ ਚਲ, ਚਲ ਚਲ ।

ਹਨੇਰਾ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ ।

ਦੂਰ ਦੂਰ ਕਿਤੇ ਕਿਤੇ ਦੀਵੇ ਟਿਮਕਦੇ ਹਨ ।

ਚਪੇ ਲਗ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ ਕਿਸਤੀ ਚਲ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ,

ਅਜੇ ਚਲੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ,

ਦਾਤਾ ਕਿਥੇ ਕੁ ?

ਤਾਰੇ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਆਏ, ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਤਰ ਆਏ,

ਹਵਾ ਰੁਮਕ ਪਈ

ਤਾਰੇ ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਨਾਲ ਖੇਲਦੇ ਹਨ, ਮੇਰੀ ਕਿਸਤੀ ਦੀ

ਚਾਲ ਤੋਂ ਬੇਪਰਵਾਹ ਹਨ ।

ਮੇਰੇ ਚਪੇ ਲਗ ਰਹੇ ਹਨ

ਕਿਸਤੀ ਚਲ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ

ਦਾਤਾ ਕਿਥੇ ਕੁ ?

ਚੰਦ ਨਹੀਂ, ਸੂਰਜ ਨਹੀਂ, ਮੇਰੀ ਬੇੜੀ ਵਿੱਚ ਦੀਵਾ ਨਹੀਂ

ਪਾਣੀਆਂ ਦੀ ਛਾਤੀ ਤੇ

ਕੋਈ ਰਾਹ ਸੜਕ ਪਗਡੰਡੀ ਨਹੀਂ,

ਮੇਰੇ ਨਿਤਾਣੇ ਚਪੇ ਹਨ ।

ਪਾਣੀ ਬੇੜੀ ਤਿਲਕਾਈ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ,

ਜਿਉਂ ਜਿਉਂ ਕਿਸਤੀ ਟੁਰਦੀ ਹੈ

ਟਿਮਕਦੇ ਚਾਨਣੇ ਦੂਰ ਹੀ ਦੂਰ ਜਾਪਦੇ ਹਨ ।

ਪਾਣੀ ਠੰਡੇ ਹਨ, ਲਹਿਰਦਾਰ ਹਨ, ਹਵਾ ਤ੍ਰਿਖੀ ਹੈ,

ਜਫੀਆਂ ਪਾਦੀ ਹੈ, ਪਰ ਹੁਣ ਹਥ ਠਰਦੇ ਹਨ,  
 ਦਾਤਾ ਅਜੇ ਕਿਥੇ ਕੁ ?  
 ਰਾਤ ਢਿਲਕ ਪਈ ਤਾਰੇ ਲਟਕ ਗਏ,  
 ਬੇੜੀ ਤਿਲਕਦੀ ਜਾ ਰਹੀ ਹੈ  
 ਪਾਣੀ ਚਪਿਆਂ ਦਾ ਮੂੰਹ ਚੁੰਮਦੇ ਹਨ ਤੇ ਆਖਦੇ ਹਨ,  
 ਚਲ, ਚਲ, ਚਲ ।  
 ਦਸ ਦਾਤਾ ! ਕਿੱਥੇ ਕੁ ?

In English idiom it says :—

### MY OARS ARE ROWING ON

My oars are splashing  
 On the crest of waters my boat is moving on  
 Slowly, slowly, in soft strides, swinging along  
 The day is closing  
 The oars are splashing, the boat is moving on  
 Yes ! whereto ?  
 The afternoon has arrived, the boat is moving on  
 The sound produced by the striking oars from the water  
 Goes on telling me :  
 Move on, move on !  
 It is gone dark  
 Far off some lights are twinkling  
 The oars are rowing, the boat is in movement  
 It is still moving along  
 Tell me my benefactor : Whereto ?  
 The stars have shown up, they have descended into waters  
 The breeze blows gently  
 The stars are playing, dancing in the waves  
 They are disconcerned with the movement of my boat  
 My oars are splashing, the boat is moving  
 Oh my benefactor, what is the destination ?  
 There is no moon, there is no sun, there is no light in my boat  
 On the chest of waters no way, no road, no path is visible

My oars are feeble  
 The water is facilitating the slipping of the boat  
 Just as the boat goes on moving  
 The twinkling lights continue to be thrown into distance !  
 The water is cold covered by waves, the wind blows fast  
 It embraces but the hands are having cold shivers  
 Oh my benefactor, still how far have I to go ?  
 The night is suffering eclipse, the stars are enervated  
 The boat is slipping along  
 The waters are kissing the face of the oars and insisting  
 Move on move on  
 Oh my benefactor tell me upto which point ?

Every word used in this poem is born out of deep mystic contemplation. How long the poet had been keenly watching the movement of his life, no one can tell. In time and space, the life in all of us, moves along. An unknown hand is holding the oar controlling the movement of the boat which every one's physique is. There are splashes. There are disturbing events. Life goes on slipping along. Its movement towards the hidden point of termination is relentless. There arrives the season in life when the sun and moon begin to lose their meaning. You no longer smile with the stars. A slow smooth process of fading out starts. A distance begins to expand between the twinkling lights and yourself. Your dear one's no longer provide the same attraction which they did in your heyday.

Where the soul is in love with the Invisible it will continue to supplicate and inquire as to which is the ultimate point of its destination. An intimate yearning continues to strive for gaining unison. The achievement lies not with you but with Him.

Let us again turn to one of his rhymed compositions. This is a "Rubai". The style is derived from Persian poetry. Bhai Vir Singh is once again seeking his "Saviour". The composition is :—



### ਓੜਲ ਡਾਚੀ

ਹ ਅਰੂਪ ! ਤੁਸੀਂ ਰੂਪਵਾਨ ਹੋ ਕਦੇ ਤਾਂ ਲਾਡ ਲਡਾਓ,  
 ਯਾ ਅਰੂਪ ਕਰ ਕਦੇ ਅਸਾਨੂੰ ਦਰਸ ਅਰੂਪ ਦਿਖਾਓ ।  
 ਸਸੀ ਵਾਂਙੂੰ ਬਾਂਹ ਉਲਾਰਾਂ 'ਓੜਲ ਡਾਚੀ' ਮਗਰੋ  
 ਦਿਨੇ ਰਾਤ ਪਈ ਕੂਕਾਂ ਸਾਈਆਂ । ਆ ਜਾਓ, ਆ ਜਾਓ ।

There is freshness everytime in his eager emotions to attain the Invisible ! The yearning in all its phases is intense. It is inspired and original. You will rarely find something like it else where. Translated it would mean :

#### **"THE INVISIBLE ENTICING CAMEL"**

O, The invisible for once assume a shape  
 And confer playful affections on me  
 Or make me for a while invisible  
 So that I may see your invisible visage  
 Like "Sassi" I am throwing up my arms  
 In eager search for the invisible enticing camel  
 Day in and day out I go on entreating :  
 "O, my Saviour come to me, come to me !"

The poet is conscious of the pining in him and recalls that in folk lore one of the most charming delicate maidens called "Sassi" burnt herself out while running in the tormentingly hot sands of the desert across which her lover had been lured away. Her lover's name was "Punu". There is some conflict as to whether he had deceptively run away on a camel or had been decoyed. There is, however, no divergence in respect of the sacrifice performed by Sassi who lost herself in the burning sands of the desert which the camel carrying Punuu had traversed.

In Bhai Vir Singh we find a burning desire to behold the unique invisible beloved. He invokes that either the invisible should manifest itself or bestow a phenomenal change converting the human into the invisible. The composition enshrines in it the ever-persisting thirst to attain reunion.

It is given indeed to very few persons that they may experience love for the Eternal. Only those who may have had some involvement can appreciate the feelings expressed by the poet.

A chain of circumstances may disengage you from earthly attractions. An event may drop you into the lap of divine love.

An invisible ray may kindle the light in you. The flame, once it is there, never goes out. There is no physical self which you love. The demarcation is firm. Within its orbit no other desire can turn up to interfere. There are moments which enrich your body and thought with elevating delight and bliss. Once you have enjoyed such emancipation you can never forget it. It has another quality, howsoever you may have been sinful, to whatever extent you may have defalcated, the grace which is once bestowed is bound to be repeated. Life has its bright and its dark chapters. Once having been accepted by Him, be sure He will redeem you. The experience which the love for the Infinite imparts is bound to repeat itself. His presence with you is highest of all rituals. His presence with you is the manifestation of true religion in you. Once he acquires, He will surely own you one day.

His kindness knows no limits. He educates the mind and the soul to remain humble. In Bhai Vir Singh self-restraint and humility were present in equal proportions. His premonitions of the visits by his master were sometimes followed by such acquaintance with the beloved that he was obliged to record the events. The following composition is descriptive of some moments of consecration. He wrote :—

ਅਨ-ਸੰਗੀਤਕ ਸੰਗੀਤ

ਬੇਸੁਰਾ ਬੇਤਾਰਾ ਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਰਾਗ  
ਹੇ ਮੇਰੇ ਰਾਗ ਰੂਪ ਸਾਈਆਂ ਜੀਓ !  
ਤੁਸਾਨੂੰ ਕਿਵੇਂ ਲਗ ਜਾਂਦਾ ਹੈ ਰਸਮਯ ?  
ਮੈਂ ਹਰਿਆਨ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਹਾਂ ਜਦੋਂ ਮੈਂ ਦੇਖਦੀ ਹਾਂ  
ਤੁਸਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੀ ਛੰਨ ਅੰਦਰ ਵੜਦਿਆਂ ਅੰਮ੍ਰਿਤ

ਵੇਲੇ ਤੇ ਮਲਕੜੇ ਬਹਿ ਜਾਂਦਿਆਂ ਸੁਣਨ ਮੇਰਾ ਬੇਸੁਰਾ  
ਰਾਗ ਤੇ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਦਿਆਂ ਮਹਵ ਉਸ ਅਨ-ਸੰਗੀਤਕ  
ਸੰਗੀਤ ਵਿੱਚ ।

### THE UNMUSICAL MUSIC

My musical performance is not in harmony  
Oh you my saviour, an incarnation of music  
Why is it that you like my song  
As being somehow pleasant ?  
I am surprised beyond measure  
When I find you entering my abode at dawn  
And softly sitting down on hearing  
My disharmonious musical invocation  
And getting into a trance  
Because of these unmusical modulations !

We are hand in hand here with a poet who had the courage in him to describe unflinchingly his spiritual experience. He was confident of love and prayerful that he may produce profound and still more lucid song. In deep meditation musical vibrations were playing inside him. The "song" was coming to him from its eternal source. He was faithful in rendering it into rhymed feelings. The invisible performance in his physical self many times found itself expressed on paper.

How does poetry come to be written ? It certainly comes from unknown ethereal regions where fountains of song are emitting showers of kindered strains of music. It is Nature's unique gift confined to very few persons. The source is the same but through different individuals the "song" has always found itself in different shapes. There are poems confined to various topics. It is the duration of the poetic spell which determines the features and the span of a poem. Let us enjoy a few fine lines of poetry from the pen of P. B. Shelley :—

Music, when soft voices die,  
Vibrates in the memory —

Odours, when sweet violets sicken  
 Live within the sense they quicken.  
 Rose-leaves, when the rose is dead,  
 Are heaped for the beloved's bed,  
 And so thy thoughts, when thou art gone,  
 Love itself shall slumber on !

Having been with Shelley let us not forget Robert Browning. We were on the topic as to how the poems come into being. You love some one even for a while and sensitive memory decides to retain evermore the feelings that arise. A comparative study will be educative of the kind of love which is usually enjoyed and the peculiar love which inspired Bhai Vir Singh to write. Browning had some experience with a Spanish lady. Her charm and affection remained with him even after she had gone away. He records his sentiments in a poem. Some portions thereof are as under :—

Here is the garden she walked across  
     Arm in my arm, such a short while since :  
 Hark, now I push its wicket, the moss  
     Hinders the hinges and makes them wince !  
 She must have reached this shrub ere she turned  
     As back with that murmur the wicket swing,  
 For she laid the poor snail my chance foot spurned  
     To feed and forget it the leaves among.  
 This flower she stopped at, finger on lip,  
     Stooped over, in doubt, as setting its claim,  
 Till she gave me, with pride to make no slip,  
     Its soft meandering Spanish name :  
 What a name ! was it love or praise  
     Speech half-asleep or song half-awake ?  
 I must learn Spanish, one of these days,  
     Only for that slow sweet name's sake.  
 Flower you Spaniard, look that you grow not  
     Stay as you are and be loved for ever !  
 But if I kiss you 'tis that you blow not :  
     Mind, the shut pink mouth opens never !

For while it pouts, her fingers wrestle,  
 Twinking the audacious leaves between,  
 Till round they turn and down they nestle —  
 Is not the dear mark still to be seen ?

Where I find her not beauties vanish ;  
 Whither I follow her beauties flee;  
 Is there no method to tell her in Spanish  
 June's twice June since she breathed it with me ?

Come bud, show me the least of her traces,  
 Treasure my lady's lightest foot fall !  
 —Ah you may flout and turn up your faces —  
 Roses you are not so fair after all !

You have to appreciate that inside you deep vibrations continue to play the past into the present. It was not for nothing that the great Robert Browning continued with the throb of a beauty that had bestowed on him some moments of affection. An endearing experience continued with him. He shared his sentiments with the rose bud which was yet to blossom in a subsequent season.

Let us turn for a while to Prof. Puran Singh who had enjoyed close association with Bhai Vir Singh. Bhai Vir Singh loved nature. In its various forms nature attracted him. In all manifestation he was persuaded to recognize his beloved. Puran Singh in the poem, the opening part whereof is quoted below, is concerned with advent of dawn. He says :—

ਪਰਭਾਤ ਆਕਾਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ

ਪ੍ਰਭਾਤ ਨੂੰ ਸੂਰਜ ਦੀ ਟਿਕੀ  
 ਅਸਮਾਨ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੁਹਾਗ ਤਿਲਕ ਲਾਉਂਦੀ,  
 ਕਿਹਾ ਸੁਹਣਾ ਸੰਧੂਰ ਦਾ ਟਿਕਾ ਚਮਕਦਾ ।  
 ਤੇ ਸ਼ਾਮ ਵੇਲੇ ਸੁਹਣੀ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਤ ਦੇ ਪੈਰਾਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਸੁਹਾਗ ਮਹਿੰਦੀ ਲਾਂਦੀ ਦਿਸਦੀ  
 ਤੇ ਜਾਂਦੀ ਲੁੜਕਦੀ ਹਿਠਾਹਾਂ ਨੂੰ  
 ਚੁੰਨੀ ਕਿਰਮਚੀ ਹਵਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਉਡਦੀ

ਤੇ ਚਾ, ਤੇ ਰੰਗ ਸਭ ਮੰਗਲਾਚਾਰ ਦਾ,  
 ਕੋਈ ਭਾਗਾਂ ਦੀ ਬਰਖਾ ਪਈ ਪੈਂਦੀ ।  
 ਭਾਵੇਂ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗਦਾ,  
 ਰੂਹ ਵਿੱਚ ਖੁਸ਼ੀ ਪਈ ਭਰਦੀ,  
 ਆਪ ਮੁਹਾਰਾ ਦਿਲ ਪਿਆ ਨੱਚਦਾ,  
 ਇਉਂ ਪ੍ਰਭਾਵ ਪੈਂਦਾ  
 ਜਿਵੇਂ ਕੋਈ ਗਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ,  
 ਕੋਈ ਖੜਾ ਖੁਸ਼ੀਆਂ ਲੁਟਾ ਰਿਹਾ ਹੈ  
 ਭਾਵੇਂ ਪਤਾ ਨਹੀਂ ਲੱਗਦਾ ।

This is admittedly blank verse. Puran Singh termed it as "Sailan Chhand". There is no rhyme, no versification in it. The poet has admired many a dawn. He has witnessed many a sunset. He has allowed many a dawn and many a sunset to inject in his sub-conscious many kinds of feelings on various occasions. This time he picks up the accumulated colours and points out as under :—

### THE DAWN IN THE SKIES !

At dawn the disc of the Sun  
 Puts a wedding mark in the sky  
 How bright is the vermilion circle  
 In the evening some beauty seems to be  
 Besmearing red the feet of Dawn  
 Which is going down with its deep red scarf  
 Blowing about in breeze !  
 And all manipulations of happiness and love !  
 There is a kind of drizzling of good fortune !  
 Imperceptible delight is saturating the Soul  
 The heart is involved in spontaneous dance  
 The atmosphere suggests as if someone is singing  
 Someone is dispersing pleasures  
 Although the reality remains a mystery !

In his depth, perhaps in thought, word and deed, Prof. Puran Singh was much nearer to Bhai Vir Singh than to any of the English poets. The clear Indian sky receiving the first rays at dawn



beautifully depicted in the aforequoted poem. The coming in of the Sun keeps before the poet's eyes the setting of the Sun. The dawn comes and the sky begins to brighten up. Having traversed the day the Sun turns into the other part of the globe. The sky goes crimson before the evening sets in.

Men and women are an integral part of nature. The distinction is that they are inherently superior to others. Their literary heritage is enriched by natural experimentation inspired by the supernatural. It is their feelings and sentiments which find expression in literature. Poetry is a revered form of literature. Short stories are coming down from the ages. Their forms, their diction, both have changed. Novels came to be written in all languages. Bhai Vir Singh also wrote novels. His pen, whatever the field, moved with a set purpose and intent. His contribution in quality and in quantity remains unsurpassed.

In this volume we come across a poem which has many stanzas out of which some are being reproduced. There is freshness but then here is the climax which is in tune with the soaring of the poet's soul. It is :—

ਫੇਰਾ ਪਾ ਜਾਣ ਦੀ ਪ੍ਰਭਾ

ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਬਚਾ ਕੇ ਮੈਂ ਚੜ੍ਹ ਗਈ ਪਉੜੀਆਂ  
ਮਲਕੜੇ ਜਾ ਪਹੁੰਚੀ ਧੁਰ ਛਤੇ  
ਤੱਕੀ ਅਸਮਾਨਾਂ ਵਲ ਉੱਪਰ ਨੂੰ, ਉੱਪਰ  
ਗੱਡ ਦਿਤੀਆਂ ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ ਤੇ  
ਮਾਰੀਆਂ ਵਾਜ਼ਾਂ  
“ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਈਆਂ ! ਮੇਰੇ ਸਾਈਆਂ !”  
ਬਝ ਗਈਆਂ ਨਜ਼ਰਾਂ  
ਢੇ ਪਏ ਛਪਰ ਅੱਖਾਂ ਦੇ ਹੋ ਹੋ ਕੇ ਭਾਰੇ ।

...

...

...





ਗਏ ਲੰਘ  
 ਸਮੇਂ ਤੋਂ ਬੀ ਉਹਲੇ ਉਹਲੇ ।  
 ਪਲੇ ਰਹਿ ਗਈ ਏ ਵਿਸਮਤਾ ਵਿਸਮਤਾ  
 ਹੇ ਅਸਚਰਜ ਰੂਪ ! ਅਸਚਰਜ ਰੂਪ !”  
 ਵਿਸਮ ਵਿਸਮ ਵਿਸਮ !

This volume published with the name “O, My Saviour” is stated to be the final collection of his poems. His spiritual experiences had ripened into faith. In his youth, even earlier, he had assimilated divine love. He had deep affection for his mentors, his Gurus. The Guru’s word, *i.e.*, Gurbani enshrined in Guru Granth Sahib provided sustenance to his thought and action. He would get up before dawn, say his prayers and thereafter in seclusion take up his pen. His fluent prose came to him from unknown regions. His abundant knowledge gave him the incentive to hand down to posterity excellent interpretation of the “Gurbani” in Guru Granth Sahib. He wrote novels tracing characters practicing in life the difficult tenets of the Sikh faith. His own way of life provided him with courage to leave an imprint on the mind of his readers that they could strive to successfully attain the same eminence.

Many people listed in vain to gain audience with him. He was successful in maintaining his dignified solitude. He could in no case be disturbed before lunch. In his privacy he was either with himself or with his invisible beloved. There was he whom no one had the reason to hate. He had many admirers. He had some devotees.

His poems remarkably depict his love for music and contain his inner feelings. He was aware of tradition but he was free from all shackles. He remains a source of inspiration. He did not intend to cause any dent. He could only emit soft rays. His whole span of life still remains a dawn in the azure sky of Indian literature.

In this poem he describes the intense longing which many times supplicated that the Master may visit him. It affirms the experience

of visit and the surprising bliss which it imparted. The English version would be :

### PHENOMINAL COMING AND GOING

According the detection by others I climbed the stairs  
 Intuitively I reached the top-most roof  
 Looked up into the heavens, still higher  
 Fixed my stare and began to beseech :  
 "Oh my saviour ! my saviour !"

My gaze became stable  
 My eyelids came down heavy and weary !

...       ...       ...       ...       ...  
 Some one embraced me  
 I was surprised and opened my eyes  
 Oh it was just a whiff of refreshing air  
 Which was affectionately pressing the bosom  
 I realized that I may cry aloud  
 "O my saviour ! O my saviour !  
 The world which ought not to listen  
 Is left down below  
 Yes now you are nearer than before  
 Whose ears my supplication may reach  
 "My saviour, Oh my saviour".

...       ...       ...       ...       ...       ...  
 The moon is up in the sky  
 But its shine is reaching down here  
 I was absorbed in thought  
 When someone kissed on my forehead  
 My eyes opened on being astonished  
 Who was kissing the forehead  
 You ! Oh you ? nay  
 It was the moonlight  
 Which was kissing me on the forehead !

...       ...       ...       ...       ...       ...  
 My saviour I am again calling for you  
 Do not be angry with me O my soft hearted beloved

This supplication is the flight with my wings,  
 I had promised that today  
 I will burn incense at your altar  
 You came, showering your kindness you came  
 But got away in the twinkling of an eye  
 Bestowing bliss as if from heavenly regions  
 Yes berefting me of the desire to touch you  
 Depriving me of perception  
 You got along  
 Even beyond time and space  
 I am blessed with bliss, real bliss.  
 Oh you who are wonderful, surprisingly amazing  
 Confer bliss, bliss everlasting bliss !

It is not the idiom or the expression which matters here. There is the congregation of intense yearning and exceptional bliss. Which were the stairs that he climbed ? He reached the top-most roof. He was desirous that his saviour should listen to his frantic entreaty. He was in a flight after the unattainable. No natural resplendence could make a representative impact. The soul was in such conscious awakening that no substitution could satisfy it. Howsoever short the duration he received the visit. He who is invisible yet amazing, He who has no physical self but is even then present everywhere, conferred sublimating bliss. A peace full of the warmth of love descended upon him. He was invigorated by a comforting reunion. His body, mind and soul received a touch from the eternal. The bud inside him blossomed into a smiling flower. A rare fragrance hypnotised his existence. The saviour was with him, inside him. The impossible had been attained. The human experienced the superhuman. A light, the kind of which is unknown to the human eye pervaded the poet. He imbibed the quality which created the power which could at times work its magic on others.

This book "Oh My Saviour" is unique in its supereminence. There is the universal touch of divinity in it. It will always inspire those who may be inclined to tread the mystic path which leads to the abode of truth.

## Rana Surat Singh

This is an epic the like of which you may not come across elsewhere.

It is also difficult to come across a person of the caliber of the poet who brought it into being.

In enumeration this is the Second Volume containing verse by Bhai Vir Singh. Forever this long poem establishes that even in early youth the theist in him had experienced bliss.

He was the follower of his Gurus in thought, word and deed. He was a Sikh who in recent times combined in himself all the virtues which a true Sikh should possess. He knew the subtle distinctions which demarcate variety of experiences variously called love. Physical attachment may or may not be love. There are assortments which for the while are "enduring" love. But the feelings even though reciprocal are not long lived.

Where the intensity in love is absolutely truthful its pure persistence elevates the souls in the two persons concerned. Lust is short lived. Love lives evermore.

This epic is the narration of events concerned with the life and times of Rana Surat Singh, who, it should be taken, had really lived the way he is depicted to have lived.

Rana Surat Singh, the poet states, was the Sikh Chieftain of a small principality. Rani Raj Kaur was his wife.

The poet, in order to provide an insight into the epic, thought it proper that he should write its preface. In his lucid style he has recorded the exposition that love is such a sublime vibration that

it incites attraction for an unknown destination. Love disengages you from all that is visible and raises you in the high region where wonderment prevails. It electrifies the body refreshing it into its original youth. Love in fact is the key to the entire mysterious process on account of which this world is progressively thriving. It awakens you to the awareness that there truly is some unique power which creates and sustains every one. Love inspires you to strive for unison with that power.

Sometimes you are convinced that if you can gain reciprocation while performing such manipulations which you want you will feel satisfied. Your estimate is almost every time erroneous. The more you indulge the more you are attracted to indulgence.

There are instances where love, love between man and woman has become an everliving, everpersisting phenomenon without there having been any occasion for the two to talk together. A glimpse of each other may incite everlasting love. In such a case the distinction between the lover and the beloved is abolished. The blessed couple may just convey the feelings of true dedicated affection by miraculous physical representations visible from some distance. This assertion is based on truthful experience. This has actually happened. Physical love which transcends physical contact has in it an eversustaining spiritual element. Even when the two are physically removed apart by adverse circumstances love persists. Love, which is free from physical desires, love which is pure keeps on shining and thriving inside the soul. It oftentimes inspires the birth of great poems.

Let us turn once again to Bhai Vir Singh. He should be accepted to have had the opportunities of knowing for himself the various phases of love. No one could have managed to narrate so effectively merely on the basis of imagination.

Rana Surat Singh had attained theological eminence. His wife immensely adored him. He wanted her to rise above the human feelings. He wanted to infuse in her the love for the

universal. He was desirous that she should realise that all manifestation is transitory. It is the love for the "Eternal" which alone can purify the soul which may then aspire to seek reunion. In his lifetime he did not succeed. He had, the story is told thus, to bow to God's design and to proceed to a war front. He attained martyrdom while fighting. His physical self was eliminated. Raj Kaur after sometime, extricating herself from grief, sent for his ashes over which a white life-size statue of Rana Surat Singh was raised. Her love took a sharp turn. The transitory nature of all earthly existence convinced her that the source of supreme power was in reality the fountain of love. Love was the life of the universe. Love for the Lord of all alone could impart refining bliss.

We have noticed the story which is the sustaining theme of this epic. Let us have the relevant stanzas in original and their rendering in English. The epic begins :—

ਪਧਰ ਇਕ ਮੈਦਾਨ	ਪਰਬਤ ਘੇਰਿਆ,
ਛੋਟਾ ਪਰ ਰਮਣੀਕ	ਸੁਥਰਾ, ਸੋਹਿਣਾ,
ਵਿੱਚ ਹਿਮਾਚਲ ਧਾਰ	ਜੋਤੋਂ ਵਿਥ ਤੇ
ਲਹਿ ਲਹਿ ਸਬਜ਼ੀ ਨਾਲ	ਸਾਰਾ ਕਰ ਰਿਹਾ ।
ਭਾਂਤ ਭਾਂਤ ਦੇ ਬੂਛੇ,	ਬੂਟੇ ਬੂਟੀਆਂ
ਉਗੇ ਥਾਈਂ ਥਾਉਂ,	ਲਹਿਰੇ ਲੈ ਰਹੇ ।
ਨਦੀ ਪਹਾੜੀ ਸਾਫ਼	ਪਾਣੀ ਸੀਤ ਦੀ
ਵਗਦੀ ਪਧਰ ਏਸ	ਉਤੋਂ ਉਤਰ ਕੇ ।
ਇਸ ਦੇ ਵਿਚੋਂ ਲੰਘ	ਡਿਗਦੀ ਹੇਠ ਨੂੰ
ਨਰਮ ਨਰਮ ਏ ਸ਼ੌਰ	ਕਰਦੀ ਜਾਂਵਦੀ ।
ਸੁੰਦਰ ਇੱਕ ਸਮਾਧ	ਕੰਢੇ ਏਸ ਦੇ
ਉਸਰੀ ਖੜੀ ਸੁਢਾਲ	ਚੂਨੇ ਗਚ ਹੈ ।
ਗੁੰਬਦ ਫਾੜੀ ਦਾਰ	ਲਾਂਭੇ ਕਲਸੀਆਂ,
ਕਲਸ ਸੁਨਹਿਰੀ ਨਾਲ	ਖੜਾ ਵਿਚਾਲੜੇ ।
ਚਿਟਾ ਮਰਮਰ ਸੰਖ	ਅੰਦਰ ਲਗਿਆ ।
ਅਬਰੀ ਦਾਰ ਸਜਾਫ਼	ਲਗੀ ਨਾਲ ਹੈ ।



ਅੰਡਾਕਾਰ ਸਮਾਧ	ਗੁੰਬਦ ਹੇਠ ਹੈ
ਕਾਰੀਗਰੀ ਅਜੀਬ	ਬਣੀ ਜੁ ਨਾਲ ਹੈ ।
ਉਪਰ ਏਸ ਸਮਾਧ	ਫੁਲ ਸੁਹਾਵਣੇ
ਪਯਾਰੇ ਹੱਥਾਂ ਨਾਲ	ਚੁਣ ਚੁਣ ਹਨ ਧਰੇ ।

The poet wrote out the entire epic in "Sirkhandi Chhand" which has peculiar music in it. The rhythmical arrangement, however, does not create the same modulation at the end of each measure. The narrative starts describing the scenic beauty of the environment concerned with the various events. The picture presented is :—

There was an even space amidst mountains  
 Small yet brilliant, clean and beautiful  
 Inside the Himalayan range  
 At some distance from a spot of worship .  
 It was resplendent on account of the greenery in it  
 It had several kinds of trees and creepers  
 Grown up in diverse places, waving in air  
 A hill stream with crystal clear water  
 Coming down the hill with cold fluid  
 Passing through this domain going down  
 In some places with soft flow but in some making noise !  
 A beautiful monument on its bank  
 Constructed upright with white lime  
 With a decorated dome with miniatures around it  
 And covered with golden plate at the top  
 The walls inside made of white marble  
 Intersections of different colours running through it  
 There is an egg-shaped grave under the dome .  
 It is made of subtle design  
 On the grave beautiful flowers are lying  
 Which have been placed by loving hands !

The poet made a deliberate choice that he should paint in poetry the final resting place of the hero of his epic. Then he invites the reader to the condition in which the queen is shown while approaching the grave. He describes :—



ਤੁਰਦੀ ਆਵੇ ਨਾਰ ਦੂਰੋਂ ਇਕ ਹੈ  
 —ਗੰਦਲ ਕ੍ਰਾਰੀ ਵਾਂਗ ਪਤਲੀ ਡੀਲ ਦੀ—  
 ਜੋਬਨ ਦਾ ਚੜ੍ਹਹਾਉ ਉਮਰ ਜਵਾਨ ਹੈ।  
 ਚਿਹਰਾ ਚੰਦੋਂ ਵਧ ਮੋਹਿਰਾ ਮੋਹਿਣਾ  
 ਇਕੋ ਸਾਰ ਨੁਹਾਰ ਫਬਨਾਂ ਵਾਲੜੀ।  
 ਪਰ ਚਿਹਰੇ ਦਾ ਰੰਗ ਪੀਲਾ ਭੂਕ ਹੈ  
 ਓਹੁ ਗੁਲਾਬੀ ਭਾਹ ਉਮਰੇ ਏਸ ਜੋ।  
 ਚਿਹਰੇ ਤੇ ਚਮਕਾਰ ਦੇਂਦੀ ਸੋਹਿਣਾ  
 ਨਜ਼ਰ ਨਾ ਆਵੇ ਮੂਲ ਉਡੀ ਹੈ ਕਿਤੇ  
 ਜਾਂ ਚਿੰਤਾ ਹਥ ਆਏ ਖਾਧੀ ਹੈ ਗਈ।  
 ਅਖਾਂ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਅੱਤ ਪਰ ਗਮ ਘੋਰੀਆਂ  
 ਰੋ ਰੋ ਹੋਈਆਂ ਸਾਫ਼ ਥਲੇ ਲਥੀਆਂ  
 ਦੇਖੋ ਠੰਢੇ ਸਾਹ ਭਰਦੀ ਆਉਂਦੀ  
 ਸ਼ੌਕ ਵਿੱਚ ਗਲਤਾਨ ਸੁਰਤ ਨ ਹੋਰ ਹੈ।  
 ਪਹੁੰਚੀ ਪਾਸ ਸਮਾਧ ਠਹਿਰੀ ਤੁੱਬਕ ਕੇ।

The poet has taken pains in describing Rani Raj Kaur. It is shown :—

From some distance a woman is coming along  
 Like a virgin green shaft of a plant  
 Thin in her profile  
 Her resplendence on the rise  
 She is in her youth  
 The face far more attractive than the moon  
 The features displaying uniform beauty  
 But her face gone distinctly pale  
 That radiance of rose colour  
 Which at her age illuminates the face  
 Having departed was no longer visible !  
 May be it had been consumed by sorrow  
 Magnificent eyes but ensnared by grief  
 Washed clean by tears, ebbd in their sockets  
 Just mark, she is coming along having sighs  
 Caught in lamentation, unaware of her existence  
 Reaching near the grave she stopped with a Shiver.

The poet had to face the task of presenting the ravage caused by bereavement in young age. Here was a wife who had spent life in ideal love. Fate had snatched away her husband. She still maintained devotional love for him. In spite of her youth the radiance on her face had faded out. As soon as she reached the earthly remains of her husband she suffered a vibration caused by instant grief.

The poet then describes that she fell down unconscious. She was revived and then a dialogue ensued. That was between her and the friendly maid who had strived to restore her to consciousness.

A portion of their conversation has high merit. The queen speaks out :—

ਪ੍ਰਿਯ ਬਿਨ ਜੀਵਨ ਮੌਤ ਮੌਤੋਂ ਹੈ ਬੁਰਾ  
ਮੌਤ ਕਰੇ ਇਕ ਵਾਰ ਏ ਨਿਤ ਸਲਦਾ ।  
ਮੈਂ ਦੁਖੀਆ ਦੁਖਿਆਰ ਪਾਪਣ ਭਾਰੀਆਂ  
ਰਹੀ ਜੀਵਦੀ ਜਗ ਪੀਯ ਸਿਧਾਰਿਆਂ ।  
ਗਈ ਨਹੀਂ ਮੈਂ ਨਾਲ ਪਯਾਰੇ ਕੰਤ ਦੇ ।  
ਜਦੋਂ ਕੰਤ ਕਿਰਪਾਲ ਦੁਨੀਆ ਵਿੱਚ ਸੇ  
ਤਦੋਂ ਰਹੀ ਅਨਗੂਲ ਵਿੱਚ ਭੁਲੇਖਿਆਂ,  
ਲੀਤੀ ਰਤਾ ਨਾ ਸਾਰ ਗੁਝੇ ਭੇਤ ਦੀ  
ਸੁੰਦਰ ਪੁਰਖ ਰਸਾਲ ਪਯਾਰਾ ਕੰਤ ਹੈ  
ਹੈ ਮੇਰਾ ਸਿਰਤਾਜ ਇਉਂ ਮੈਂ ਜਾਣ ਕੇ  
ਦੇਹੀ ਨਾਲ ਪਿਆਰ ਉਸਦੀ ਪਾਲਿਆ  
ਬੁਲਬੁਲ ਵਾਂਗ ਨਿਹਾਲ ਦੇਹੀ ਪ੍ਰੀਤ ਨੇ  
ਦੇਹੀ ਦਾ ਹੀ ਰਾਗ ਨਿਤ ਅਲਾਪਿਆ  
ਲੀਤੀ ਕਦੇ ਨਾ ਸਾਰ ਅਸਲੀ ਭੇਤ ਦੀ ।  
ਉਹ ਸੀ ਪੂਰਨ ਸੰਤ ਗੁਰਮੁਖ ਹੋਇਆ  
ਉਹ ਸੀ ਦ੍ਰਿਵ ਸਰੂਪ ਭਗਤੀ ਰਤਿਆ  
ਉਹ ਸੀ ਪੂਰਨ ਆਪ ਪੂਰਨ ਹੋਇਆ ।  
ਉਸਨੂੰ ਸਾਰੀ ਸਾਰ ਅੰਦਰ ਬਾਰੂ ਦੀ ।  
ਸੂਰਤ ਸੀਸੇ ਵਾਂਗ ਸਦਾ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ਦੀ  
ਮੈਂ ਨਾ ਲਖਿਆ ਹਾਏ ਅੰਦਰ ਓਸਦਾ ।

ਦੇਹੀ ਨਾਲ ਪਿਆਰ—ਪ੍ਰੇਮੀ ਵਾਕੁਰੇ—  
 ਰਹੀ ਨਿਖੁੱਟੀ ਨਿੱਤ ਭੁਲੀ ਮਾਣਦੀ ।  
 ਹਾ ! ਮਾਯਾ ਨੇ ਘੇਰ ਅਸਲੋਂ ਵਾਂਜ ਕੇ  
 ਰਖੱਯਾ ਸਦਾ ਅਚੇਤ ਆਤਮ-ਭੇਦ ਤੋਂ ।  
 ਆਤਮ-ਜੀਵਨ-ਖੇਡ ਖੁਲ੍ਹੀ ਨਾ ਕਦੇ ।  
 ਪਰ ਸੀ ਪਤੀ ਸੁਜਾਨ ਬਖਸ਼ਾਂ ਵਾਲੜਾ  
 ਮੇਰੇ ਨਾਲ ਸਨੇਹ ਕਰਦਾ ਐਕੁਰਾਂ  
 ਭੇਤ ਖੁਲ੍ਹੇ ਜਿਸ ਨਾਲ ਸੱਚ ਪ੍ਰਕਾਸ਼ ਹੋ ।  
 ਮੈਂ ਨਿਜ ਲਗਨੇ ਲੀਨ ਪਰਤੀ ਅੱਖ ਨਾ  
 ਗਹਿਲੀ ਬੇਪਰਵਾਹ ਸੈਨਤ ਨਾ ਲਖੀ  
 ਤੁਰੀ ਨਾ ਓਸੇ ਰਾਹ ਜਿਸਤੇ ਕੰਤ ਦੀ  
 ਸੀਗੀ ਸਦਾ ਸਲਾਹ ਤੌਰਨ ਸੰਦੜੀ ।

These vibrations contain introspection. Rana Surat Singh loved Raj Kaur. That did not contain him. He had an elevating love for the divine. He wanted that Raj Kaur should comprehend that howsoever pure, the love confined to her husband had hardly anything transcendental about it. He had realised that all that was visible was transitory. The panoramic confrontation was all a vanishing show. He had been blessed with the light which shining across his path of life could spare him from pit-falls of desire. In his flight for the eternal he wanted Raj Kaur to join him. She could not think of anything beyond him. In her reminiscence she sketches the past in this way :

Without the beloved life is death, even worse  
 Death stabs once, this goes on stabbing day in day out  
 Woe betide me, I am so affected that  
 I go on living even after the demise of the beloved  
 I have not gone away with him  
 So long as my kind hearted beloved was in this world  
 Unmindful of reality I entertained misconceptions  
 I did not stir at all to dive into the secret  
 He is handsome, hypnotising and loveable  
 Accepting that he is to be worshipped  
 I spent out myself in material love

The physical love full of song like the "Bulbul"  
 Sustained the music in the limbs  
 Never devised any uncovering of the secret !  
 He was a high ranking saint in tune with God  
 He was a manifestation of love in meditation  
 He was redeemed in sublime stature  
 He was fully aware of the visible and the invisible  
 Like the looking glass  
 He could produce true reflections  
 My mistake I did not comprehend his greatness  
 Love for the limbs—like a lover—  
 Deprived of reality, I continued to enjoy  
 This beguiling environment kept me in oblivion  
 It kept me in dark in respect of the eternal secret  
 I never realised the mystic thirst in the soul  
 But my husband was enlightened who could  
 Impart a generous touch of real bliss  
 He had that deep attachment with me  
 Which wanted that I should gain knowledge  
 And bathe in the sunshine of truth !  
 Caught in the snare of my own longing  
 I did not lift even an eye-lid  
 Being absolutely disconcerted  
 I did not recognise the direction indicated  
 Did not take to the path  
 Which my husband wanted me to resort to !

The poet was not merely philosophising. He had experienced formidable spiritual currents and cross-currents. Born out of his own self-experimentation his message spread over the inspiring pages of the epic had the elevating element of truth in it. The story formulated in the epic was carefully pondered over and selected. The aim was to educate his co-religionists as well as others as to what indeed is the "love for the eternal". Howsoever pure, ardent and faithful an attachment between a husband and a wife may be its confines keep it within their own grasp. The attainment of the sublime requires an awakening of the soul which may control all thoughts and all actions.

This epic is full of instructions which may change the inner vibrations in the mind. We have to notice them. The exposition is :—

ਮੁਲ ਨਾ ਵਿਕਦਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਸਯਾਣੇ ਆਖਦੇ :  
 ਦੌਲਤ ਜਾਨ ਨਾ ਮਾਲ-ਕੀਮਤ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਦੀ  
 ਮੁਲ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਹੋਰ ਨਾ ਮੁਲ ਹੈ  
 ਹੀਰੇ ਨੂੰ ਇਕ ਵਿਨੁ ਹੀਰਾ ਹੀ ਸਕੇ  
 ਤਿਵੇਂ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਆਪ ਵਿਹਾਝਦਾ  
 ਸੋ ਪਾਣੀ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਐਸਾ ਸੱਚ ਦਾ  
 ਦੇਖ ਬੂਟਿਆਂ ਜੋਸ਼ ਉਠੇ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਦਾ  
 ਮੁਲ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਦਾ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਬੂਟੇ ਪਾਉਂਦੇ ।  
 ਨਾਲ ਪ੍ਰੇਮ ਦੀ ਖਿੱਚ ਖਿਚਣ ਨੀਰ ਨੂੰ  
 ਲੈਂਦੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਮਾਏ ਸੀਨੇ ਆਪਣੇ  
 ਰਗ ਰਗ ਰੇਸੇ ਵਿਚ ਆਪਣੀ ਦੇਹ ਦੇ  
 ਜੜ੍ਹ ਤੋਂ ਚੋਟੀ ਤੀਕ ਨੀਰ ਸਮਾਉਂਦੇ  
 ਫਲ ਫਲ ਡਾਲੀ ਪਤ ਲੈ ਕੇ ਮੀਤ ਨੂੰ  
 ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿੱਚ ਅਭੇਦ ਕਰਦੇ ਇਕ ਹੋ ।

By citing an uncontestable example Bhai Vir Singh is defining the relationship which true love postulates. He brings home the truth in this way :—

Love is not available at any price in coin  
 Wealth, life and property cannot purchase it.  
 Love is available to love, it demands no other price  
 A diamond can be cut through by a diamond alone  
 Similarly love alone begets love  
 The water has such an element of love in it  
 That on seeing the plants it rushes to them  
 The plants respond to that love  
 With intense affection they consume it in abundance  
 They instill the water in themselves  
 They allow it inside every nerve every space  
 From their very roots in their entire profile

It is the water that saturates them  
 In their fruit, in branches, in leafage  
 They absorb their friend inside themselves !

This allegory provides insight into the process which true love keeps persisting in those whose affection for each other is natural and is a force sustaining life. No plant bearing flowers or fruit, or both of them, can live without water. It is the life derived from water which permeates from its roots and keeps alive every fibre in the plant. Here is an example which may persuade you to ponder over the events of your life. You may discover what kind of feelings you had at one time or the other for some one. Were you attracted to the colour of the skin, the narcissus eyes and the enchanting beauty which the person presented ? Was it love or was it mere infatuation ? How long and in what circumstances did it persist ? Did it ever occur to you that there is a power which goes on creating charming creatures ? Have you ever had a touch of the invisible ? Has something unseen invited you sometimes to its mysterious existence ?

There is a kind of joy which no beauty, no warmth, no gainful action can impart. That joy coming from an unknown source suddenly confers bliss.

Turning to the anecdote we find that the poet makes Rani Raj Kaur and the maid accompanying her to move about in interesting natural environment. They are shown climbing uphill. A big stone well entrenched in the soil has a place of worship sculptured at its top. In this part of the epic an admirable description brings you face to face with the mountain which the ladies climbed. The poet records :-

ਵਾ ਨੇ ਕੀਤਾ ਜੋਰ ਵੇਗ ਵਧਾਇਆ  
 ਬ੍ਰਿਛ ਮਚਾਯਾ ਸ਼ੋਰ ਦੋਵੇਂ ਜਾਗੀਆਂ,  
 ਦੇਖਣ ਚਾਰ ਚੁਫੇਰ ਠੰਢਕ ਛਾ ਰਹੀ  
 ਬਦਲ ਘਟਾ ਅਪਾਰ ਠਟ ਬਨਾਇਕੇ

ਸੀਤਲ ਛਾਯਾ ਦੇਣ ਸੀਤਲ ਪੈਣ ਹੈ  
 ਲੱਖ ਏ ਸਮਾਂ ਸੁਵਲ ਫਿਰ ਉਹ ਚਲੀਆਂ  
 ਹੋਲਾ ਕੁਝ ਸਰੀਰ ਹੁਣ ਸੀ ਹੋ ਗਿਆ  
 ਅਕੱਣ ਅਤੇ ਥਕਾਨ ਘਾਬਰ ਸੀ ਘਟੀ,  
 ਉਤੋਂ ਛਾਈ ਠੰਢ ਛਾਯਾ ਸੰਘਣੀ  
 ਹੋਲਾ ਹੋ ਗਯਾ ਆਪ ਪੈਂਡਾ ਐਕੁਰਾਂ ।  
 ਹੋਈ ਪੈਣ ਸਹਾਇ ਪਿਛੋਂ ਆਂਵਦੀ  
 ਦੇਵੇ ਧਕਾ ਪਿਠ, ਧਰਤੀ ਜ਼ੋਰ ਨੂੰ  
 ਏਕੁਰ ਦੇਏ ਘਟਾਇ ਘਟਦਾ ਜਾਂਵਦਾ  
 ਚੜ੍ਹਹਾਈ ਦਾ ਦੁੱਖ ਉਪਰ ਜਾਂਦਿਆਂ ।  
 ਕੁਛ ਕੁ ਸਮੇਂ ਦੇ ਬਾਦ ਸਿਖਰ ਪਹਾੜ ਤੇ  
 ਦੋਵੇਂ ਪਹੁੰਚੀਆਂ ਜਾਇ ਜੱਫਰ-ਜਾਲ ਕੇ ।  
 ਇਥੇ ਸੀ ਇਕ ਸੈਲ ਕਹੋ ਚਟਾਨ ਜਾਂ  
 ਸੈਆਂ ਗਜਾਂ ਦੀ ਡੀਲ ਉੱਚਾ ਲੰਮੜਾ  
 ਚੌੜਾ ਅਤੇ ਵਿਸ਼ਾਲ ਭਾਰੀ ਡੀਲ ਦਾ,  
 ਵਖਰਾ ਸੀ ਨਾ ਏਹ ਅੰਦਰੋਂ ਅੰਦਰੀਂ  
 ਧਰਤੀ ਅੰਦਰ ਤੀਕ ਸੀ ਇਕ ਪੱਥਰਾ ।  
 ਸਿਖਰੇ ਪਥਰ ਏਹ ਜੋ ਇਕ ਸਾਰ ਸੀ  
 ਉਸ ਨੂੰ ਉਕਰ ਉਕੇਰ ਮੰਦਰ ਸੋਹਿਣਾ  
 ਸਮੇਂ ਪੁਰਾਣੇ ਢੇਰ ਕਿਸੇ ਬਨਾਇਆ  
 ਹੈ ਸੀ ਇਕ ਦਲਾਨ ਦੋ ਤਿਨ ਕੋਠੀਆਂ  
 ਅਗੇ ਵਿਹੜਾ ਸਾਫ ਖੁਲ੍ਹਾ ਸੀ ਵਡਾ ।  
 ਚੌਫੇਰੇ ਇੱਕ ਕੰਧ ਓਸੇ ਪਥਰੇਂ  
 ਉਕਰ ਬਨਾਈ ਸੀਗ ਯਾ ਰਖ ਪਥਰਾਂ  
 ਬੀੜ ਬੀੜ ਕੇ ਠੀਕ ਵਲਗਣ ਸੀ ਵਲੀ ।  
 ਇਸ ਵਿਹੜੇ ਵਿਚਕਾਰ ਵਡਾ ਕੁੰਡ ਸੀ  
 ਨਿਰਮਲ ਜਲ ਦੇ ਨਾਲ ਭਰਿਆ ਸੋਹਿਣਾ ।

The rendering in English may be :

The wind blowing fast became more energetic  
 The trees began to make noise and both of them woke up  
 They felt it was cool all around



The dark clouds in a mass, providing shade  
 Fine refreshing cool breeze  
 Calculating that the time was favourable  
 They started, their bodies feeling relaxed  
 Disinclination, fatigue, dreariness gone  
 There was the protection provided by cool shade  
 The traversing of distance seemed easier  
 The air pushing from behind was helpful  
 Pressing forward it reduced the grasp of earth  
 The difficulty in climbing was being minimised  
 After some time they reached the mountain peak  
 Traversing and overcoming obstacles  
 Here there was all consolidated rock  
 Extending broad and high in many yards  
 Broad and spacious in big profile  
 It was not separated and deep inside  
 It was all a stone in great span  
 At its top where it was level and strong  
 There someone in ancient times  
 Had sculptured out a place of worship  
 There was a verandah and two-three rooms  
 In front of them a spacious enclosure  
 On four sides a wall cut out of that stone  
 And in some places studded by other stones  
 An enclosure had been devised  
 In the courtyard was a big deep indenture  
 Containing refreshing crystal clear water !

The portrait in this stanza vividly brings before the mind's eye the picture of a remarkable mountain. You can see the two of them climbing up. You begin to wonder how the sculptures worked hard to chisel out a temple out of a granite stone. They carved out two-three rooms. There under the shade of the sky existed a semblance of a lake of pure water.

There was no greenery at the top. The mountain was all stone. It was symbolic of complete isolation. The environment would provide an atmosphere which would inspire meditation.

Rani Raj Kaur was in a peculiar state of mind. The god-send companion with her had imbibed similar attitude to life.

According to the poet, Rani Raj Kaur had reached the palace inhabited by the fairies.

It is narrated that she entered a room and there found a "fairy" sitting in meditation. Her face had wrinkles caused by age. Behind the fairy was a stone fixed high in the wall and bearing a writing. Raj Kaur read it. She was mystified. The handwriting was that of her husband. In an atmosphere of joy and suspense she found that the writing reproduced a "Shabad", *i.e.*, a composition contained in the Sikh scriptures. Beneath that were the signatures of her husband "Surat Singh".

I do not consider that there is anything meridian in inventing such a link in the chain of the narrative. May be the poet desired to create a supernatural effect on the mind of his readers. Was it necessary to excite fancy? Whatever may have been the reason Bhai Vir Singh aimed at creating real reverence for Sikhism and for Gurbani, *i.e.*, the compositions in the Sikh scriptures.

The two characters of Rana Surat Singh and Rani Raj Kaur are at all stages so well devised that the reader is filled with great respect for their religion.

There was a period for which she stayed in that palace. In this epic poetic licence has been deliberately resorted to.

Raj Kaur inquires of the fairy whom she had found in meditation :

“ਕੈਸਾ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਥਾਨ ਕਿਹੀ ਇਕਾਂਤ ਹੈ !  
ਕੀਕਰ ਏਥੇ ਆਣ ਡੇਰੇ ਪਾ ਲਏ ?  
ਤੁਸਾਂ ਕਹੋ ਕਿਸ ਤੌਰ ਥਾਂ ਇਹ ਲਭਿਆ ?”

How beautiful is this magnificent abode  
There is comforting solitude here  
How did you come to abide here ?  
Please tell how did you find out this place ?

Then the fairy begins to describe her adventure. The history of the temple is narrated.

The detailed account has a ring of truth in it. Rani Raj Kaur was told that the palace was ancient. When "Bodh Rikhi" a sage who was either a follower of Lord Buddha or Lord Buddha himself had sermonised about his concept of religion then the entire nation had begun to accept his guidance. The chieftains and their assistants had all become Buddhists. A leading personage belonging to that religion had come across the palace which offered solitude for meditation. He persuaded one of the monarchs to employ sculptures to carve out the temple. The entire edifice was contrived out of stone. No lime, no other building material was used.

In a deep natural hollow spot rain water used to collect. It was there and remained pure and useful. There was a small spring nearby. According to need water could be procured from there.

The Rani was then asked to look in a particular direction. The statue of the Buddhist monk was enshrined there. She was told that in course of time Buddhism lost its sway and Jainism had its spell. The temple came under Jainist influence. They set up statue of one of their leading figures named "Vardhman". After the decline of Jainism, the sect whose leader was "Gorakh Nath" Jogi predominated in the vicinity and the temple came under their sway. Thereafter the Rajputs came into power. The worship of various deities began. The Jogis, even then continued to resort to various practices and to strive to gain certain powers. The so-called fairy then apprised Rani Raj Kaur that her father became a Jogi. He got his ears pierced and put the rings therein. To his horrors he came to know that his predecessors here used to drink wine in order to sustain their meditative postures.

I was born after eight or ten days of my father's renouncement of his hearth and home. My mother who was in deep abiding love with her husband used to shed tears in grief. After

about three years she set out in search of her husband. She found out a great Jogi and he directed her to this place. My father, even after seeing her lamentable condition did not bestow any kindness. He remained rigid. My mother did not throw up the sponge. We had hardly anything to feed upon. My mother would pick up some fruit from the trees. We would eat that fruit and drink from this water tank. At one time it became very cold. The range nearby was covered with snow. My mother suffered fatal illness and perished. I used to get warmth in an embrace of my mother. I was left clinging to a ice-cold dead body. Hearing my cries my father came out. He took me inside along with himself. In course of time I was brought up. My father taught me all systems of yogic performances. I was schooled in controlling my respiration. Then my father began to age.

The poet becomes indeed very lucid while describing the repercussions in her father who had sacrificed every comfort and practised arrogant asceticism. The fairy whom Rani Raj Kaur had found meditating stated :-

ਪਿਤਾ ਹੋ ਗਏ ਬ੍ਰਿਧ ਜੋਬਨ ਹਾਰਿਆ  
 ਰਹਿ ਅਰੋਗ ਚਿਰ ਤੀਕ ਉਮਰਾ ਭੋਗਦੇ  
 ਪਰ ਹੁਣ ਘਟਿਆ ਜੋਰ ਕੁਦਰਤ ਵਾਲੜਾ  
 ਅੰਗਾਂ ਰਹੀ ਨਾ ਤਾਣ ਹੋਵੇ ਜੋਗ ਨਾ ।  
 ਕਰਨ ਜਿ ਹਠ ਧਰ ਜੋਗ ਜੋਰ ਨਾ ਸਾਥ ਦੇ,  
 ਜੇਕਰ ਕਰਦੇ ਨਾਂਹ ਟੁਟਦੀ ਦੇਹ ਸੀ  
 ਟੋਟ ਨਸ਼ੇ ਦੀ ਵਾਂਙ ਦੇਹੀ ਖੁਸਦੀ  
 ਫਿਰ ਤਾਂ ਕਈ ਕੁ ਵਾਰ ਛਮ ਛਮ ਰੋਂਵਦੇ  
 ਕਹਿੰਦੇ, “ਲੀਤਾ ਕੀਹ ਕੰਨ ਪੜਾਇਕੈ ?  
 ਦੇਹੀ ਨੂੰ ਦੁਖ ਦੇਇ ਦੇਹੀ ਸੁਖ ਨੂੰ  
 ਡਿਠਾ ਕੇਵਲ ਹਾਇ ! ਰਬ ਨਾ ਲਭਿਆ,  
 ਉਮਰ ਭੋਗ ਲਈ ਢੇਰ ਮਿਲਿਆ ਓ ਨਹੀਂ”  
 “ਜਿਕੁਰ ਪਿਆਰੀ ਰਾਜ ਤੂੰ ਅੱਜ ਆ ਗਈ  
 ਇੱਕੁਰ ਇੱਕ ਦਿਨ ਆਪ ਸੂਰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਜੀ  
 ਪਰਬੱਤ ਕਰਦੇ ਸੈਰ ਅਚਣਚੇਤ ਹੀ

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The philosophy proclaimed herein is the main-stay of this entire epic. Without being critical of the twist given to the episode you must stretch out the cup of a devotee with eager thirst so that you may be able to invite nectar into it. The path which may lead you to the source of divine bliss is defined in the concluding observations :—

“My father became old, his youth declined  
 He had lived long without ailment  
 But he now began to lose his natural vigour  
 No strength was left in the limbs to practice Yoga  
 If he would exert his capacity would not help  
 If he would not exercise the body will feel torn  
 Deprived of the intoxicant the body seemed withering  
 Because of that he would many times shed tears  
 He would declare “what have I gained  
 By getting my ears pierced  
 Agonised the body to gain comfort  
 But experienced obstinacy; have not found God  
 Have spent out a long life but He remains unknown”.  
 My dear Raj just as you have come today  
 Similarly one day Surat Singh Ji himself  
 Walking through these mountains suddenly  
 Appeared inside this temple and receiving him  
 My father accosted him with affection.  
 In reality he had been greatly attracted  
 By the winsome visage of the chieftain  
 A natural affection had been kindled in him  
 Thereafter for sometime both remained together here  
 There started an exchange of views about spiritualism  
 My father poured out the sorrow in his heart  
 Learning about the tormented past  
 The heart-rending manner in which my mother died  
 My plight which called for sympathy  
 With his heart full of feelings and with tearful eyes  
 Surat Singh Ji softened and became kind  
 He released the treasure-trove containing divinity



In which knowledge and renunciation participate  
 Then cautiously he persuaded my father  
 To give up self-imposed heartless exertions  
 He instructed him in refined regal detachment  
 Then he divulged in entirety the occult way to meditate  
 Explained through love how bliss could be attained  
 How one could always vibrate in unison with the Lord  
 Never parting with him in sub-conscious existence  
 Always being grateful, admiring his munificence  
 Enjoying his beneficial love  
 The worshippers are evermore full of bliss  
 We were made to believe !  
 How to gain elevation; he explained  
 The manner in which scriptures were to be practiced  
 He educated us as to how to pray and beseech the Master  
 How to systemise the self to be grateful  
 And instilled in us the faith that the dictates  
 Of the Providence must be accepted  
 Having Him always with you is the real yoga !

There was a well to do person who was the ruler of some principality. He was having all possible comforts. He had married and had a loving wife. In his mind there was the yearning to gain spiritual knowledge. He was, somehow, persuaded that he should renounce everything. At a time when his dear wife was pregnant he decided to give up hearth and home. He abjured the world, climbed a mountain peak, found seclusion in a temple and began meditating in prescribed postures. The body had to be positioned in different ways. While controlling the breath and the limbs, some prescribed words were to be chanted. He was out to find God.

His wife suffered a lot on account of the separation inflicted on her. After the departure of her husband she had given birth to a daughter. They lived in poverty. The wife continued to search for her husband. She was made aware of the place where he was. Alongwith her tiny three years old daughter she climbed up and reached the fringes of the temple. Her husband's hardened attitude did not accommodate her inside the shelter which the rooms



adjoining the temple could provide. She was left to the vagaries of the weather. The mother and the child lived on some fruit and water. Beaten down by hard circumstances the mother perished. The pitiable cries of his daughter moved the man in meditation. He picked her up. She was reared up and instructed that she should practice yoga in the same manner in which her father had been practicing.

Years rolled by. Age began to sap his strength. At the tail end of life he became conscious that by practicing yogic penance he had not gained anything. He was full of remorse, when, according to the narration devised by the poet, the hero of the epic Rana Surat Singh suddenly appeared on the scene. He stepped inside the temple. The yogi was attracted to him. There ensued a discussion between the two. Surat Singh was able to convince the yogi that :—

(i) The yogic practices were tormenting exercises to which the limbs were subjected to. Controlling respiration and chanting of some words in routine could only increase ego but could not enlighten the mind.

(ii) That God was present everywhere. He was not to be found out by abjuring the world. He in His kindness could confer bliss on anyone who loved Him. The highest form of worship or yoga was to find Him present always with you. To live a life vibrating in unison with Him was the only way to imbibe divine delight. Self-surrender producing a state of desirelessness could be achieved while discharging all worldly responsibilities.

True faith demanded that the mind and soul should conform to Him and accept the divine will in all circumstances.

Rani Raj Kaur was thus enlightened as to what really was the accomplishment of her husband and as to what kind of life he wanted every one to live.

This brings out that before Bhai Vir Singh ventured on spinning out this epic, he had lived in accordance with the ideals which he sought to embellish. It was with the desire to preach the gospel

that he adopted the story. He made the epic exceedingly interesting. His performance displays a superb command over the language. The poetic rhythm involves the mind with itself. The reader is persuaded to go on reading. It does not end there. The quality of expression is of such an order that he who once reads is persuaded to go through it again and again.

There is the narration as to what happened in that palace of the fairy on the first night. Raj Kaur is told by the fairy :--

ਰਾਤੀਂ ਛੁਟਦਾ ਸੰਗ ਸੂਰਜ ਇਕ ਦਾ,  
ਪਰ ਲਖਾਂ ਦਾ ਮੇਲ ਰਾਤੀਂ ਹੋਂਵਦਾ  
ਨਾਲ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਸਤਿਸੰਗ ਸਾਡਾ ਹੋਂਵਦਾ  
ਹੀਰਯਾਂ ਵਾਂਙੂ ਏਹ ਡਲ੍ਹਕਾਂ ਮਾਰਦੇ  
ਸੀਤਲ ਦੇਵਣ ਸਾਫ਼ ਮਿਠਾ ਚਾਨਣਾ,  
ਗੁੰਬਜ਼ ਨੀਲਾ ਸਾਫ਼ ਇਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਫਬਾਇਆ  
ਥਾਲ ਕਿਹਾ ਗੁਰ ਆਪ ਨੀਲੇ 'ਕਾਸ਼ ਨੂੰ  
ਤਾਰਯਾਂ ਜੜਤ ਜੜਾਉ ਵਾਲਾ ਥਾਲ ਹੈ ।  
ਭਿਨੀ ਹੋਵੇ ਰੈਣ ਨਿਰਮਲ ਅੰਬਰਾ :  
ਸਮਾਂ ਬਣੇ ਅਦਭੁਤ ਮਨ ਨੂੰ ਮੋਹਿਣਾ ।  
ਕੁਦਰਤ ਮਾਨੋ ਆਪ ਇਕਾਗਰ ਹੋਂਵਦੀ  
ਪਾ ਸ਼ਾਂਤੀ ਏਕਾਂਤ ਠੰਡ ਸੁਹਾਵਣੀ  
ਪਰਤੇ ਸਾਈਂ ਵਲ ਕਰੇ ਉਪਾਸ਼ਨਾ  
ਸਦਕੇ ਹੋ ਹੋ ਆਪ ਕਰਦੀ ਆਰਤੀ ।

The night brings with it beautiful stars. High up in the mountains, particularly in a place of worship, the atmosphere becomes more devotional. Rani Raj Kaur is told :—

The night deprives you of the sun  
But lacs, *i.e.*, myriads of others are with you  
We have divine conversation with them  
They shine like the diamonds  
Conferring soft cool and clear light.  
They have decorated the azure dome  
The Guru described the sky as an engraved plate

It is a spacious plate studded with stars  
 Warm and sweet is the night under clear skies  
 Time becomes enchanting and lovely  
 It appears that nature is self-concentrated  
 Because of solitude the cold atmosphere is fine  
 The thoughts turn to God and become worshipful  
 The soul in admiration burns its incense  
 As if nature itself is revolving in homage !

A keen observer of nature, a poet with a highly imaginative mind, a mature devotee was incorporating in verse a unique picture depicting the pure environment on a peak high up in the mountains. Since times immemorial these high Indian mountains have attracted men with saintly disposition. There is sublimating seclusion. Nature in pristine form reminds you of the Creator. His presence sometimes becomes more eloquent. You feel that the power which has raised high mountains, in whose control myriads of streams are rushing by is the same out of which men and women are born. If His creatures are beautiful, if He is ever persisting and undying why would you not like to know Him.

There is another aspect which may be mentioned. There are innumerable stages which the one in search of truth has to come across. You may reach within yourself such situations which may hold out that they are the climax. The regard which people may begin to show to you would create ego. You may become confident of your greatness. Your advancement may stop there.

Those who gain real knowledge may be inclined to keep it to themselves. Even spiritual wealth is not shared. In discussing intricate spiritual problems in the course of this epic, Bhai Vir Singh has magnanimously distributed his knowledge to all those who care to read him. He raised himself to a high level through self-experimentation. The Supreme power was kind in disbursing knowledge to him. He was generous in doling it out to others. In the seventeenth part of the epic some hidden secrets pertaining to that "palace of the fairies" are sought to be disclosed.

Rani Raj Kaur is told that her husband Rana Surat Singh had stayed there quite for sometime. He used to receive letters there making inquiries regarding spiritual problems. She was told :—

ਬੈਠਯਾ ਕਰਦੇ ਆਪ ਏਥੇ ਆ ਕਦੇ  
 ਕਰਦੇ ਸਨ ਸਤਿਸੰਗ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਤਾਰਦੇ  
 ਕਈ ਕੁ ਵੇਰੀ ਆਪ 'ਖੰਡ ਸਮਾਧ ਲਾ  
 ਬੈਠੇ ਰਹਿੰਦੇ ਲੀਨ ਰਬੀ ਮਸਤੀਆਂ  
 ਕਈ ਕੁ ਵਾਰੀ ਉਤਰ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਬੈਠ ਕੇ  
 ਧਰਮ ਵਿਸ਼ੇ ਦੇ ਸਵਾਲ ਕਰਦੇ ਹਲ ਸੇ,  
 ਕਈ ਕੁ ਸੰਤਾਂ ਪਤਰ ਏਥੇ ਆਂਵਦੇ  
 ਪੁਛਦੇ ਗੂੜ੍ਹੇ ਭੇਤ ਧਰਮ ਗਿਆਨ ਦੇ  
 ਸੂਰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁਜਾਨ ਲਿਖਦੇ ਏਸ ਥਾਂ  
 ਬੈਠ ਉਨ੍ਹਾਂ ਦੇ ਜ਼ਾਬ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਸੁਹਿਣੇ ।  
 ਔਣ ਜਾਣ ਇਸ ਥਾਉਂ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਦਾ ਸਖੀ  
 ਜਾਣੇ ਹੋਰ ਨਾ ਕੋਇ ਬਿਨ ਸਤਿਸੰਗੀਆਂ  
 ਸੋ ਪਯਾਰੀ ! ਪ੍ਰਿਯ ਕੰਤ ਕਈ ਕੁ ਜੋ ਲਿਖੇ  
 ਪਏ ਉਤਾਰੇ ਪਾਸ ਮੇਰੇ ਅੰਦਰੇ  
 ਓ ਲੈ ਜਾ ਤੂੰ ਨਾਲ ਪੜ੍ਹੀਂ ਚਿਤਾਰ ਕੇ  
 ਦਸਖਤ ਤੇਰੇ ਕੰਤ ਸਿੰਘ ਸੁਜਾਨ ਦੇ  
 ਸਾਈਂ ਵਾਲੇ ਭੇਤ ਜੀਵਨ-ਗੁੰਝਲਾਂ  
 ਗੋਰਖ ਧੰਦੇ ਢੇਰ ਇਸ ਸੰਸਾਰ ਦੇ  
 ਖੋਲ੍ਹ ਧਰੋ ਹਨ ਸਾਫ ਜੀਕੂੰ ਜੰਦਰੇ  
 ਕੁੰਜੀ ਦੇਵੇ ਖੋਲ੍ਹ ਸਹਿਜੇ ਸੋਖਿਆਂ ।

According to the version given to her Raj Kaur was apprised that her husband had been coming and staying there. The information given was :—

He used to come and spend time here  
 Used to talk on spiritual matters elevating us  
 Many times in deep meditation  
 He would remain in tune with God  
 Many times he would sit and write replies  
 Answering questions pertaining to religion

Many times letters were received here from saints  
 Inquiring about the difficult aspects of religion  
 The man of divine wisdom Surat Singh  
 Would sit here and sort out beautiful replies  
 Excepting those who were close associates  
 No one knew that he used to visit this place  
 Therefore O' you his loving wife may know  
 That I have with me the copies of his replies  
 You may take them with you and peruse carefully  
 These bear the signatures of your husband  
 The divine secrets, the problems besetting life  
 The various involvements with worldly affairs  
 Are discussed and solved, the secrets opened up  
 Just as a key easily opens the lock.

How was it that Rana Surat Singh had been keeping away and staying at that spot for days together without the knowledge of Raj Kaur? Proceeding with the version as it is Raj Kaur must have had some surprise while receiving the copies of the letters written by her husband which had been left at the temple. It is stated that the copies wrapped in a red handkerchief were brought out. Raj Kaur bowed in reverence and wanted to leave the place alongwith them. She affirmed that she would be coming to the temple often in order to seek the company of the exalted lady living there. The fairy then remonstrated. She declared that her father had instructed her to live in solitude and pray at the feet of the invisible Master. If Raj Kaur was to have her way then others may also start coming.

The fairy pointed out a fine stream flowing nearby and detailedly described that if at a precise point Raj Kaur was to take a turning she would come across a big stone standing aloof and of white colour. From there she was to turn to the left where a solitary slab was to become visible. On tilting that a dark passage was to become visible walking through which with some candle light a door was to be approached. She told Raj Kaur that if she would pronounce certain words which she was to remember then those

inside would open the door. Beyond that lived highly religious married couples who held daily congregations. They were following the precepts of the Gurus. Their common abode had been originated by her husband.

In the aforesaid narration the poet has inserted appropriate compositions from the Sikh scriptures. Such quotations lead to the conclusion that the aim was to record their exposition and to establish that there were people living in accordance with the injunctions in Gurbani.

At that particular stage the poet introduces another woman in a peculiar context. The lady happened to be the aged mother of Rani Raj Kaur. She has spent days together expecting that Raj Kaur will come back. Many times her employees searched through the gardens. At odd hours they looked for Raj Kaur in the vicinity of the monument raised in respect of Rana Surat Singh. It was all in vain.

Then follows the nineteenth section in the epic. This is devoted to the reunion between the mother and the daughter. A moonlit night is described in poetic detail. The mother who had as her last resort taken to praying for the return of her daughter takes the daughter in her lap. Rani Raj Kaur intimated this to her mother :—

ਕਹਿੰਦੀ ਅੰਮੀ ! ਚੰਦ ਤੇਰੀ ਗੋਦ ਦਾ  
ਕਰ ਅਸਮਾਨੀ ਸੈਲ ਗੋਦੀ ਆ ਗਿਆ ।  
ਗੋਦੀ ਬੈਠੀਆਂ ਆਇ ਬੈਠੀ ਵੇਖ ਲੈ

“She said look mother the moon belonging to you  
Having travelled through the heavens  
Has come back, look into your lap it is there !”

The meeting is described at length. This chapter in a way is a dimensional digression.

Another chapter draws a graphic picture of Rani Raj Kaur engaged in prayer before Guru Granth Sahib. The gist of it was the supplication to seek permission to peruse the copies of the



letters stated to have been written by her husband to various persons. Some of them have been reproduced.

The first letter which may be noticed was addressed to Shrimati Karam Kaur who belonged to village "Thatian" and whose son Sher Singh had joined in the war against Muslim enemy forces. He was taken a prisoner and ultimately killed while in bondage. Rana Surat Singh is shown to have been informed about the episode and some portions from the letter are quoted below :—

ਗੁਰੂ ਸੁਆਰੀ ਆਪ ਮਾਤਾ ਪਯਾਰੀਏ  
ਸ਼ੇਰ ਸਿੰਘ ਦੀ ਮੌਤ ਪਹੁੰਚੀ ਆ ਅਸਾਂ  
ਤੂੰ ਰਹੀਉਂ ਜਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਇਕ ਇਕਲੜੀ  
ਰੋਣ ਆਇ ਚਿਤ ਸੋਚ ਤੇਰੇ ਹਾਲ ਨੂੰ  
ਪਰ ਰੋਵਣ ਦੀ ਨਾਹਿ ਮਾਤਾ ਥਾਉਂ ਇਹ  
ਤੇਰੇ ਪਤੀ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਹੋਏ ਜੂਝਦੇ  
ਦੋ ਪੁਤ ਸਫਲੇ ਜੰਗ ਸਨਮੁਖ ਜੂਝ ਕੇ  
ਧੀ ਬੀ ਜੁਧ ਮਦਾਨ ਹੋਈ ਸ਼ਹੀਦ ਸੀ,  
ਹੁਣ ਛੇਕੜ ਦਾ ਲਾਲ ਦੀਪਕ ਵੰਸ਼ ਦਾ  
ਉਜਲ ਕਰਦਾ ਵੰਸ਼ ਸੁਹਣਾ ਜੂਝਿਆ

You dear mother are blessed by the Guru  
I have learnt about the death of Sher Singh  
You are left all alone in the world  
The heart weeps out while thinking about you  
But this is not the occasion for crying  
Your husband died while fighting  
Two sons attained martyrdom on the battle-field  
You lost a daughter also in the war  
This time the youngest son, scion of the family  
Upholding the family tradition fought vigorously.

Then towards the end of the letter he praises the sacrifices made for the noble cause. He consoled her :—



ਕੀਤੀ ਮਿਹਰ ਅਪਾਰ ਲਿਆ ਕਬੂਲ ਹੈ  
 ਤੇਰਾ ਸਭ ਪਰਵਾਰ ਦਵਾਰੇ ਆਪਣੇ  
 ਤੂੰ ਧੰਨ ! ਧਰਮੀ ਕੰਤ ਤੇਰਾ ਧੰਨ ਸੀ  
 ਸਾਰੀ ਨਾਲ ਔਲਾਦ ਤੇਰੀ ਧੰਨ ਹੈ  
 ਦੇਸ਼-ਪੰਥ ਦੇ ਕੰਮ ਜੇੜੀ ਆ ਗਈ  
 ਤੇਰਾ ਸਭ ਪਰਵਾਰ ਸਫਲਿਯਾ ਅੰਮੀਏ ।  
 ਤੂੰ ਨਾ ਇੱਕਲੀ ਜਗ ਸਾਰਾ ਪੰਥ ਹੀ  
 ਤੈਨੂੰ ਕਹਿੰਦਾ ਮਾਉਂ ਵਡ ਪਰਵਾਰੀਏ ।

God has been kind in welcoming  
 Your entire family at His threshold  
 You are venerable, so was your husband  
 Your entire family will evermore remain venerable  
 It has spent itself in maintaining the community  
 Your family has attained admirable accomplishment  
 You are not alone in this world the entire people  
 Call you as dear mother of such a large family.

You will find in this the arrow flying in wider space, striking at another target. The Sikh people had been baptised by Guru Gobind Singh Ji. They became the Khalsa. The tenth Guru dedicated the Khalsa to God. He declared that the "Khalsa" was the destined army belonging to God. The Khalsa was to defend the poor and the down-trodden. Those who were to embrace death while fighting selflessly in a righteous cause were to be respected and eulogised as martyrs.

Rana Surat Singh affirms that having spent her entire family in a common cause, Mai Karam Kaur had endeared herself to the entire community as the common mother of all.

There are similar letters addressed to others. Various aspects of Sikhism are discussed therein.

The poet through this epic intensified the desire in the Sikhs to live upto the expectations of their Gurus. Whenever in accordance with the trend of the recorded events he got a chance, Bhai Vir Singh utilised it for preaching the gospel given by the Sikh

Gurus to the mankind. Rana Surat Singh is recognised as a monumental production in the domain of religious literature.

The poet was successful in introducing [many mysterious situations. He fostered links in the story by giving unexpected turns to the circumstances.

The maiden who had climbed into the temple alongwith Rani Raj Kaur became her constant companion. They used to sleep near to each other at night. One morning she found that Raj Kaur's bed was empty. She began to search for her. Suddenly she heard a voice striking through the air just as a streak of lightening would suddenly shine accross the skies. Guided by it Radha, that being her name, hastened towards the place from where the sound had come. She was confronted by a closed door. Looking through the chink she saw the Rani in a unique posture. She was reverentially kneeling in prayer. She was singing in soft melodious voice. The composition from the Sikh scriptures which Raj Kaur was pronouncing was to elevate her into high mystic regions. Her soul was caught in a divine spell. The supernatural possessed her. In a trance she turned her eyes upwards. She was staring into deep heavens. A shiver passed through her. Her fertile imagination incited her to speak to her husband who seemed to have appeared before her. This imaginary meeting between a departed husband and his wife in lamentation was devised to express exceptional feelings. The poet was to propagate through the meeting between them, the views which deserved to be interestingly implanted in the readers.

It would not be useful to reproduce the entire text. The material portions are reproduced hereunder :—

ਇਥੋਂ ਹੀ ਏ ਆਪ ਪਯਾਰੇ ਦੇਖ ਲੋ :  
 ਮੈਂ ਵਿਚ ਸ਼ਕਤਿ ਨ ਮੂਲ ਮੈਂ ਬਲ ਹੀਨ ਹਾਂ  
 ਸੁਣਦੀ ਹਾਂ ਉਪਦੇਸ਼ ਸਕਾਂ ਕਮਾਇ ਨਾ  
 ਸੋ ਪਯਾਰੇ ਜੀਅ ਦਾਨ ਦੇਵਨ ਵਾਲੜੇ !  
 ਪੂਰੀ ਲਓ ਕਰਾਇ ਅਪਣੀ ਆਗਿਆ

ਮੈਂ ਦਾਸੀ ਤੋਂ, ਭੇਜ ਨਿਜ ਬਲ ਆਪਣਾ  
ਆਪ ਲਿਚਲੋ ਆਪ ਪਯਾਰੇ ਕੰਤ ਜੀ  
ਸਤਿਸੰਗਤ ਦੇ ਦੇਸ਼ ਲੜ ਪਕੜਾਇਕੇ !  
ਜਿਕੁਰ ਪੇਕਯੋਂ ਆਪ ਘਰ ਨੂੰ ਆਪਣੇ  
ਲੈ ਗਏ ਸਾਉ ਆਪ, ਉੱਕਰ ਕੰਤ ਜੀ  
ਲੈ ਚਲੋ ਸਤਿਸੰਗ ਆਗੂ ਹੋਇ ਕੇ  
ਲੈ ਚਲੋ ਪੀਯ ਨਾਲ, ਪੀਆ ਲੈ ਚਲੋ  
ਜਿਥੇ ਹੈ ਵੇ ਵਾਸ ਹਰਦਮ ਆਪ ਦਾ  
ਓਥੇ ਆਪਣੇ ਨਾਲ ਰਖੋ ਜੀ ਸਦਾ'

O my dearest you can estimate the situation  
No stamina is left in me, I have no strength  
I do listen to the sermons but cannot act accordingly  
Therefore you while bestowing life on me  
May obtain compliance with your command  
From me, by lending your personal prowess  
My dear husband you please pick me up  
And lift me into the world of spiritual congregation  
The way you brought me from my paternal home to yours  
Similarly lead me into the domain of eternity  
O my dear one, O my dearest obtain me into yourself  
To be with you in your abode evermore !

It is true that in your dreams those whom you remember many times put in their appearances. It is a rare accomplishment, however, to be in such love that while awake you may enjoy the presence of the departed. The profile may not be visible. Some voice may pronounce the requisite words. In life strange happenings are experienced. Rani Raj Kaur is an exceptionally faithful loving wife. Her husband, while discharging all his duties, was living out his life in mystic detachment. He was not an ordinary man. He did not feel satisfied by merely reciting the scriptures unto himself. He was living out true religion. He was in no bondage. By meditating he had gone beyond meditation. In all situations he consciously had the presence of God with him. It was he whom Raj Kaur loved in life and whose mandate she began to

appreciate after he attained martyrdom. In his life-time he did not succeed in making her realise that it was the Creator indeed who deserved to be loved. His death was not forgotten after the usual period of mourning. The affliction in Raj Kaur gave her greater insight into religion. Events educated her in seeking the true purpose of existence. Her premonition guided her to a place wherein sublime environment was situated the "temple of peace". She was wonder-struck when she found one of her sex sitting there in meditation. In the course of her contact instead of getting any words of consolation she received information which inspired her to seek eternal bliss. The hand of destiny which was holding her fast lifted her soul into the province of divinity. Bhai Vir Singh was for once out to prove the truth in the saying "seek and you shall find".

The poet did the yeomans service to Sikhism in evolving this epic in this manner and to this extent, Rana Surat Singh has become a book of reference. The exposition of Sikhism in it remains uncontradicted.

In the concluding portion (Chapter 33) it is outlined as to how a true Sikh is to conduct himself through life. It is insisted that he should associate with those who have faith in God and who are wedded to the dogma of Sikhism. The birds of the same feather fly together. According to Bhai Vir Singh there is no midway. You have to go the whole hog.

Let us notice some of the prime instructions recorded in the ultimate portion of this epic.

“ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋਵੇ ਜਾਏ ਜਦ ਜੀ ਰੱਬ ਨੂੰ  
ਤਦੋਂ ਚੇਤਨਾ ਸੁਧ ਸ਼ਕਤੀ ਅੰਤਿ ਦੀ  
ਪੈਦਾ ਹੋਵੇ ਆਨ ਪਰਗਟ ਹੋਇ ਜਾਂ  
ਜਿਸਨੂੰ ਸਾਡੀ ਬੁੱਧਿ ਲਖ ਨਾ ਸਕਦੀ ।  
ਜੜ੍ਹਤਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਨਾ ਮੂਲ ਹੋਏ ਚੇਤਨਾ  
ਪਰ ਉਸ ਹਾਲਤ ਵਿੱਚ ਹੋਵੇ ਚੇਤਨਾ  
ਐਸੀ ਉਚੀ ਤੇਜ ਸਾਫ ਸੁਹਾਵਣੀ

ਕਿ ਇਹ ਸੁੰਦਰ ਜੀਵ ਬਲੀਆ ਹੋਇਕੇ  
ਮਾਨੋ ਹੋਇ ਸਪੁਤਰ ਸਚੇ ਰਬ ਦਾ  
ਇਕ ਸੁਰ ਹੋ ਉਸ ਨਾਲ ਇਕ ਮਨ ਬੋਲਦਾ ।

When the soul attains divinity  
Then the awakening into truthfulness gains tremendousness  
Such is the quality of that prowess  
That intellect cannot comprehend or define it  
Affixed in life you cannot be enlightened  
But in that state of being you imbibe divine grace  
So illuminating pure and resplendent it is  
That the sublimated soul gains superior strength  
Turning the individual into the "Son of God"  
In tune with Him, he at all times converses with Him.

A son must possess some qualities of his father. The poet asserts that when the soul attains unison the individual turns into the Son of God. Such a person will possess great moral strength. With his clean life he will acquire admirable vigour in the body. In blood and bone he will stand apart from all others.

Bhai Vir Singh was not preaching on the basis of scholastic knowledge. He was the one who in the first instance lived out what he wrote about. He dipped his pen in truth to write about truth.

It is one of the cardinal principles of Sikhism that having acted righteously the Sikh must gratefully accept the ultimate decision by God in all matters. The will of the Providence prevails.

It is enjoined that you must remain grateful to God under all circumstances.

Rana Surat Singh is presented as an ideal Sikh. The life-story of Rani Raj Kaur is that of a person in urgent eager search. She was in search of love. Her husband really loved her. He wanted to proceed beyond physical attachment. She being enchanted by his handsomeness could not look beyond her nose. His death

deprived her of physical contact. Her worshipful affection gathered greater momentum. The thirst in her soul became acute. From many an event she learnt fresh lessons.

Then started the message from the unseen. Rani Raj Kaur grasped the meaning. Her life took a turn in the right direction. She conquered her desires. She effortlessly began to advance towards eternal bliss. Her actions began to inspire others.

This epic covering man and woman educates all men and women to live as true Sikhs.

It prescribes that mere recitation of Gurbani may be good but it is not the end in itself. You must understand what the scriptures convey. You must make a choice of every word you speak. You must be clean in thought, word and deed. The fact that all this is a vanishing show if accepted would compel you to seek the eternal. You will attend to all demands which life may make but you will no longer seek to deceive others to serve your own ends. You will not yield to temptation. You will be aware that God is with you, prompting but watching all your actions. You must possess absolute harmony with Him.

Bhai Vir Singh assures you :—

ਵਾਹਿਗੁਰੂ ਜੀ ਨਾਲ ਲਿਵ ਨੂੰ ਲਾਇਆਂ  
ਆਵੇ ਹੈ ਏ ਸਵਾਦ ਜਦ ਹੋ ਜਾਂਵਦੇ  
ਅੰਤਰ ਮੁਖੀਏ ਸਭ ਮਨ ਤੇ ਇੰਦਰੇ  
ਆਪੇ ਨੂੰ ਰਸ ਰੂਪ ਕਰ ਏ ਦਸਦਾ ।  
ਮਨ ਤਨ ਰਹਿਣ ਅਰੋਗ ਇਸਦੇ ਆਇਆਂ ।

When the mind and soul are in tune with God  
You acquire sublimating blissfulness  
Because of which the mind and all perceptive organs  
Become introspective  
The existent self is saturated with eternal beauty  
The mind and body attain invigorating health  
With sublimating bliss inside you !



The aforequoted assurance would brighten up your future if you decide to attain the state of desirelessness. When desires will no longer incite your actions you will find an awakening and your soul will begin to yearn for unison with Him who creates everything and into whom all that is visible is to merge.

In His kindness He may confer on you the inclination to love Him and Him alone. That may lead to real emancipation. This epic may prove to be an elevating boon. You will rever the accomplishment which the poet attained.